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METAPSYCHICAL PHENOMENA

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METAPSYCHICAL PHENOMENA

METHODS AND OBSERVATIONS

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WITH A PREFACE BY CHARLES RICHET
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AND AN INTRODUCTION BY SIR OLIVER LODGE

Also with a New Chapter containing

'A COMPLEX CASE,' BY PROFESSOR RICHET

AND AN ACCOUNT OF

'SOME RECENTLY OBSERVED PHENOMENA'

BY THE TRANSLATOR L. I. FINCH

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NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR

The Translator has to thank sincerely a literary friend, a well-known English clergyman, who has been kind enough to revise the translation, and suggest many improvements.

INTRODUCTION

Asked by my friends in France to introduce the author, Dr. Maxwell, to English readers, I willingly consented, for I have reason to know that he is an earnest and indefatigable student of the phenomena for the investigation of which the Society for Psychical Research was constituted ; and not only an earnest student, but a sane and competent observer, with rather special qualifications for the task. A gentleman of independent means, trained and practising as a lawyer at Bordeaux, Deputy Attorney-General, in fact, at the Court of Appeal, he supplemented his legal training by going through a full six years' medical curriculum, and graduated M.D. in order to pursue psycho-physiological studies with more freedom, and to be able to form a sounder and more instructed judgment on the strange phenomena which came under his notice. Moreover, he was fortunate in enlisting the services of one who appears to be singularly gifted in the supernormal direction, an educated and interested friend, who is anxious to preserve his anonymity, but is otherwise willing to give every assistance in his power towards the production and elucidation of the unusual things which occur in his presence and apparently through his agency.

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In all this they have been powerfully assisted by Professor Charles Richet, the distinguished physiologist of Paris, whose name and fame are almost as well known in this country as in his own, and who gave the special evening lecture to the British Association on the occasion of its semi-international meeting at Dover in 1899.

In France it so happens that these problems have been attacked chiefly by biologists and medical men, whereas in this country they have attracted the attention chiefly, though not exclusively, of physicists and chemists among men of science. This gives a desirable diversity to the point of view, and adds to the value of the work of the French investigators. Another advantage they possess is that they have no *arrière-pensée* towards religion or the spiritual world. Frankly, I expect they would confess themselves materialists, and would disclaim all sympathy with the view of a number of enthusiasts in this country, who have sought to make these ill-understood facts the basis for a kind of religious cult in which faith is regarded as more important than knowledge, and who contemn the attitude of scientific men, even of those few who really seek to observe and understand the phenomena.

From Dr. Maxwell's observations, so far, there arises no theory which he feels to be in the least satisfactory: the facts are recorded as observed, and though theoretical comments are sometimes attempted in the text, they are admittedly tentative and inadequate: we know nothing at present which will suffice to weld the whole together into a comprehensive and comprehensible scheme. But for the theoretical discussion of such phenomena the work of Mr. Myers on Human Personality is of course far more thorough and ambitious than the semi-popular treatment in the present book. And in the matter of history also, the English reader, familiar with the writings of Mr. Andrew Lang and Mr. Podmore, will not attribute much importance to the few historical remarks of the present writer. He claims consideration as an observer of exceptional ability and scrupulous fairness, and his work is regarded with the greatest interest by workers in this field throughout the world.

There is one thing which Dr. Maxwell does not do. He does not record his facts according to the standard set up by the Society for Psychical Research in this country: that is to say, he does not give a minute account of all the details, nor does he relate the precautions taken, nor seek to convince hostile critics that he has overlooked no possibility, and made no mistakes. Discouraged by previous attempts and failures in this direction, he has regarded the task as impossible, and has not attempted it. He has satisfied himself with three things:—

1st. To train himself long and carefully as an observer;

2nd. To learn from, and be guided by, the phenomena as they occur, without seeking unduly to coerce them;

3rd. To give a general account of the impression made upon him by the facts as they appeared.

For the rest, he professes himself indifferent whether his assertions meet with credence or not. He has done his best to test the phenomena for himself, regarding them critically, and not at all in a spirit of credulity; and he has endangered his reputation by undertaking what he regards as a plain duty, that of setting down under his own name, for the world to accept or reject as it pleases, a statement of the experiences to which he has devoted so much time and attention, and of the actuality of which, though he in no way professes to understand them, he is profoundly convinced.

Equally convinced of their occurrence is Professor Richet, who has had an opportunity of observing many of them, and he too regards them from the same untheoretical and empirical point of view; but he has explained his own attitude in a Preface to the French edition, as Dr. Maxwell has explained his in 'Preliminary Remarks,'—both of which are here translated—so there is no need to say more; beyond this:—

The particular series of occurrences detailed in these pages I myself have not witnessed. I may take an opportunity of seeing them before long; but though that will increase my experience, it will not increase my conviction that things like some of these can and do occur, and that any other patient explorer who had the same advantages and similar opportunity for observation, would undergo the same sort of experience, that is to say, would receive the same sensory impressions, however he might choose to interpret them.

That is what the scientific world has gradually to grow accustomed to. These things happen under certain conditions, in the same sense that more familiar things happen under ordinary conditions. What the conditions are that determine the happening is for future theory to say.

Dr. Maxwell is convinced that such things can happen without anything that can with any propriety whatever be called fraud; sometimes under conditions so favourable for observation as to preclude the possibility of deception of any kind. Some of them, as we know well, do also frequently happen under fraudulent and semi-fraudulent conditions; (but those who take the easy line of assuming that hyper-ingenious fraud and extravagant self-deception are sufficient to account for the whole of the facts, will ultimately, I think, find themselves to have been deceived by their own *a priori* convictions.) Nevertheless we may agree that at present the Territory under exploration is not yet a scientific State. We are in the pre-Newtonian, possibly the pre-Copernican, age of this nascent science; and it is our duty to accumulate facts and carefully record them, for a future Kepler to brood over.

What may be likened to the 'Ptolemaic' view of the phenomena seems on the whole to be favoured by the

French observers, viz. that they all centre round living man, and represent an unexpected extension of human faculty, an extension, as it were, of the motor and sensory power of the body beyond its apparent boundary. That is undoubtedly the first adit to be explored, and it may turn out to lead us in the right direction; but it is premature even to guess what will be the ultimate outcome of this extra branch of psychological and physiological study. That sensory perception can extend to things out of contact with the body is familiar enough, though it has not been recognised for the senses of touch or taste. That motor activity should also extend into a region beyond the customary range of muscular action is, as yet, unrecognised by science. Nevertheless that is the appearance.

The phenomena which have most attracted the attention and maintained the interest of the French observers, have been just those which convey the above impression: that is to say, mechanical movements without contact, production of intelligent noises, and either visible, tangible, or luminous appearances which do not seem to be hallucinatory. These constantly-asserted, and in a sense well-known, and to some few people almost familiar, experiences, have with us been usually spoken of as 'physical or psycho-physical phenomena.' In France they have been called 'psychical phenomena,' but that name is evidently not satisfactory, since that should apply to purely mental experiences. To call them 'occult phenomena' is not distinctive, for everything is occult until it is explained; and the business of science is to contemplate the mixed mass of heterogeneous appearances, such as at one time formed all that was known of Chemistry, for instance, or Electricity, and evolve from them an ordered scheme of science.

To emphasise the fact that these occurrences are at present beyond the scheme of orthodox psychology or psycho-physiology, in somewhat the same way as the germ of what we now call Metaphysics was once placed after, or considered as extra to, the course of orthodox Natural Philosophy or Physics, Professor Richet has suggested that they be styled 'meta-psychical phenomena,' and that the nascent branch of science, which he and other pioneers are endeavouring to found, be called for the present 'Metapsychics.' Dr. Maxwell concurs in this comparatively novel term, and as there seems no serious objection to it, the English version of Dr. Maxwell's record will appear under this title.

The book will be found for the most part eminently readable—rather an unusual circumstance for a record of this kind—and the scrupulous fairness with which the author has related everything he can think of which tells against the genuineness of the phenomena, is highly to be commended. Whatever may be thought of the evidence it is manifestly his earnest wish never to make it appear to others better than it appears to himself.

If critics attack the book, as they undoubtedly will, with the objection that though it may contain a mass of well-attested assertions by a competent and careful observer, yet his observations are set down without the necessary details on which an outside critic can judge how far the things really happened, and how far the observer was deceived—let it be remembered that this is admitted. Dr. Maxwell's defence is, that to give such details as will satisfy a hostile critic who was not actually present is impossible—in that I am disposed to agree with him—he has therefore not attempted the task; and I admit, though I cannot commend, his discretion.

It may be said that the attempt to give every detail necessarily produces a dreary and overburdened narrative. So it does. Nevertheless I must urge—as both in accordance with my own judgment of what is fitting, and in loyalty to the high standard of evidence, and the more stringent rules of testimony, inaugurated by the wise founders of the Society for Psychical Research—that observers should always make an effort to record precisely every detail of the circumstances of some at least of these elusive and rare phenomena; so as to assist in enabling a fair judgment to be formed by people who are not too inexperienced in the conditions attending this class of observation, and at any rate to add to the clearness of their apprehension of the events recorded. The opportunities for research are not yet ended, however, and I may be allowed to express a hope that in the future something of this kind will yet be done, when the occasion is favourable, after a study of such a record as that of the Sidgwick-Hodgson-Davy experiments in the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, vol. iv.

Our gratitude to Dr. Maxwell would thus be still further increased.

And now, finally, I must not be understood as making myself responsible for the contents of the book, nor for the interjected remarks, nor for the translation. The author and translator must bear their own responsibility. My share in the work is limited to expressing my confidence in the good faith of Dr. Maxwell — in his impartiality and competence,—and while congratulating him on the favourable opportunities for investigation which have fallen to his lot, to thank him, on behalf of English investigators, for the single-minded pertinacity and strenuous devotion with which he has pursued this difficult and still nebulous quest.

OLIVER LODGE.

PREFACE

THERE are books in which the author says so clearly and in such precise terms what he has to say that any commentary weakens their import; and a preface becomes superfluous, sometimes even prejudicial.

Dr. Maxwell's work belongs to this category. The author, who has long given himself up to psychology, has had the opportunity of seeing many interesting things. He has observed everything with minute care; and having well thought out the method of observation, the consequences, and the nature itself of the phenomena, he lays bare his facts and deducts therefrom a few simple ideas, fearlessly, honestly, *sine ira nec studio*, before a public which he hopes to find impartial.

To this same public I address the short introduction, with which my friend Dr. Maxwell kindly asked me to head this excellent work.

My advice to the reader may be summed up in a few words. He must take up this book without prejudice. He must fear neither that which is new, nor that which is unexpected. In other words, while preserving the most scrupulous respect for the science of to-day, he must be thoroughly convinced that this science, whatever measure of truth it may contain, is nevertheless terribly incomplete.

Those imprudent people who busy themselves with 'occult' sciences are accused of overthrowing Science, of destroying that bulwark which thousands of toilers, at the cost of an immense universal effort, have been occupied in constructing during the last three or four centuries.

This reproach seems to me rather unjust. No one is able to destroy a scientific *fact.*

An electric current decomposes water into one volume of oxygen and two of hydrogen. This is a fact which will be true in the eternal future, just as it has been true in the eternal past. Ideas may perhaps change on what it is expedient to call electric current, oxygen, hydrogen, etc. It may be discovered that hydrogen is composed of fifty different bodies, that oxygen is transformed into hydrogen, that the electric current is a ponderable force or a luminous emission. No matter what is going to be discovered, we shall never, in any case, prevent what we call to-day an electric current from transforming, under certain conditions of combined pressure and temperature, what we call water into two gases, each having different properties, gases which are emitted in volumetrical proportions of 2 to 1.

Therefore, there need be no fear, that the invasion of a new science into the old will upset acquired data, and contradict what has been established by savants.

Consequently psychical phenomena, however complicated, unforeseen, or appalling we may now and then imagine them to be, will not subvert any of those facts which form part of to-day's classical sciences.

Astronomy and physiology, physics and mathematics, chemistry and zoology, need not be afraid. They are intangible, and nothing will injure the imposing assemblage of incontestable facts which constitute them.

But notions, hitherto unknown, may be introduced, which, without casting doubts upon pristine truths, may cause new ones to enter their domain, and change, or even upset, our established notions of things.

The facts may be unforeseen, but they will never be contradictory.

The history of sciences teaches us, that their bulwarks have never been overthrown by the inroad of a new science.

At one time no notion of tubercular infection existed. We now know that it is transmitted by microbes. This is a new notion, teeming with important conclusions, but it does not invalidate the clinical table of pulmonary phthisis drawn up by physicians of other days. The discovery of Hertzian waves has in nowise shaken Ampère's laws. Newton's and Fresnel's optics have not been changed into a tissue of errors because Rœntgen rays and luminous vibrations are able to penetrate opaque bodies. It appears that radium can throw out unremittingly, without any appreciable chemical molecular phenomena, great quantities of calorific energy; nevertheless, we may be quite sure, that the law of conservation of energy and thermodynamic principles will remain as true now as ever.

Likewise, if the facts called 'occult' become established, as seems more and more probable, we need not feel anxious as to the fate of classical science. New and unknown facts, however strange they may be, will not do away with old established facts.

To take an example from Dr. Maxwell's work, let us admit that the phenomenon of *raps*—that is to say, sonorous vibrations in wood or other substances—is a real phenomenon, and that, in certain cases, there are sounds which no mechanical force known to us can explain, would the science of physics be overthrown? It would be a new force thrown out on to wood, etc., exercising its power on matter, but the old forces would none the less preserve their activity, and it is even likely that the transmission of vibrations by means of this new force would be found to be in obedience to the same laws as those governing the transmission of other vibrations;—the temperature, the pressure, the density of air or wood would continue to exercise their usual influence. There would be nothing new, save the existence of a force until then unknown.

Now, is there any savant worthy of the name who can affirm, that there are no forces, hitherto unknown, at work in the world?

However impregnable Science may be when establishing facts, it is miserably subject to error when claiming to establish negations.

Here is a dilemma, which appears to me to be very conclusive in that respect:—Either we know all Nature's forces, or we do not. Now the first alternative is so ridiculous, that it is really not worth while refuting it. Our senses are so limited, so imperfect, that the world slips away from them almost entirely. We may say it is owing to an accident, that the magnet's colossal force was discovered, and if hazard had not placed iron beside the loadstone, we might have always remained ignorant of the attraction which loadstone exercises upon iron. Ten years ago no one suspected the existence of the Rœntgen rays. Before photography, no one knew that light reduces salts of silver. It is not twenty years since the Hertzian waves were discovered. The property displayed by amber when rubbed was, until two hundred years ago, all that was known of that immense force called electricity.

Question a savage—nay a fellah or a moujik—upon the forces of Nature! He will not know even the tenth part of such forces as elementary treatises on physics in 1905 will enumerate. It appears to me that the savants of to-day, in respect to the savants of the future, stand in the same inferiority as the moujiks to the professors of the college of France.

Who then dare be so rash as to say that the treatises on physics in 2005 will but repeat what is to be found in the treatises of 1905? The probability—the certainty, one might say—is that new scientific data will shortly spring up out of the darkness, and that most powerful and altogether unknown forces will be revealed. Our great-grandchildren will be amazed at the blindness of our savants, who tacitly profess the immobility of science.

If science has made such progress of late, it is precisely because our predecessors were not afraid to make bold hypotheses, to suppose new forces, demonstrating their reality by dint of patience and perseverance. Our strict duty is to do likewise. The savant should be a revolutionist, and fortunately the time is over when truth had to be sought in a master's book—*magister dixit* —be he Aristotle or Plato. In politics we may be conservative or progressive; it is a question of temperament. But when the research of truth is concerned we must be resolutely and unreservedly revolutionary, and must consider classical theories—even those which appear to be the most solid—as temporary hypotheses, which we must incessantly check and incessantly strive to overthrow. The Chinese believed that science had been fixed by their ancestors' sapience; this example contains food for meditation.

Moreover—and why not proclaim it loudly—all that science of which we are so proud, is only knowledge of appearances. The real nature of things baffles us. The innermost nature of laws governing matter, whether living or inert, is inaccessible to our intelligence. A stone tossed up into the air falls back again to the earth.

Why? Newton says through attraction proportional to bulk and distance. But this law is only the statement of a fact; who understands that attractive vibration, which makes the stone fall? The fall of a stone is such a commonplace phenomenon, that it does not astonish us: but in reality no human intelligence has ever understood it. It is usual, common, accepted; but like all Nature's phenomena without exception it is *not understood.* After fecundation an egg becomes an embryon; we describe as well as we can the phases of this phenomenon; but, in spite of the most minute descriptions, have we understood the evolution of that cellular protoplasm, which is transformed into a huge, living being? What prodigy is at work in these segmentations? Why do these granulations crowd together there? Why do they decay here to form again elsewhere?

We live in the midst of phenomena and have no adequate knowledge of any one of them. Even the simplest phenomenon is most mysterious. What does the combination of hydrogen with oxygen mean? Who has even once been thoroughly able to understand that word *combination*, annihilation of the properties of two bodies by the creation of a third body differing from the two first. How are we to understand that an atom is indivisible; it is constituted of a particle of matter, yet—even in thought—it cannot be divided!

Therefore it behoves the true savant to be very modest, yet very bold at the same time: very modest, for our science is a mere trifle—Ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη σοφία *ὀλίγου τινος ἄξιά ἐστι, καὶ οὐδενός*—very bold, for the vast regions of worlds unknown lie open before him.

Audacity and prudence : such are the two qualities, in no wise contradictory, of Dr. Maxwell's book.

Whatever be the fate in store for his ideas—ideas based upon facts—we may rest assured that the facts, which he has well observed, will remain. I think I see here the lineaments of a new science—though only a crude sketch so far.

Who knows but that physiology and physics may find herein some precious elements of knowledge? Woe to the savants who think that the book of Nature is closed, and that we puny men have nothing more to learn.

Charles Richet.

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PRELIMINARY REMARKS

I HESITATED for a long time before deciding to publish the impressions which ten years of psychical research have left me. These impressions are so uncertain upon several points, that I wondered if it were worth while expressing in book form the few and sparse conclusions I am able to formulate. If, finally, I decide to publish my opinions, it is because it seems incumbent upon me to do so. I am not blind to the fact that my testimony is of very little importance; but however modest it may be, it seems to me that it is my duty to offer this testimony, such as it is, to those who have undertaken to submit to scientific discipline the study of those phenomena which are, in appearance at least, so rebellious to such discipline. It might have been more convenient and advantageous for myself had I continued my researches in peace and quiet. I do not try to proselytise, and it is really a matter of indifference to me, whether my contemporaries share or do not share my views. But the sight of a few brave men fighting the battle alone is by no means a matter of indifference to me. There is a certain cowardliness in believing their teachings, whilst allowing them to bear all the brunt of the fray for upholding opinions, which require so much courage to champion. To these brave spirits I dedicate my book.

I care naught for public opinion: not that I disdain it—on the contrary, I have the greatest respect for its judgment—but I am not addressing the public. The question I am studying is not ripe for the public; or the case may be the other way about.

I address those brave men of whom I have just spoken, to let them know I am of their mind, and that *my* observations confirm theirs on many points. I also address those who are seeking to establish the reality of the curious phenomena, treated of in this book. I have tried to fill a gap by showing them the best methods to adopt, in order to arrive at appreciable results,—such results being far less difficult to obtain than is commonly supposed.

A word about the method I have followed. I have purposely refrained from giving a purely scientific aspect to my book, though I might have done so had I chosen, for the usual scientific dressing is unsuitable to the subject in hand. It seemed preferable to relate what I have seen, leaving it to those for whom I write to believe me or not, as they think fit.

I might have accumulated not a little testimony and considerable external evidence, but to have done so would not have been the means of convincing a single extra reader. Those, whom my simple affirmation leaves sceptical, would not be convinced by reports signed by witnesses, whose sincerity and competence are frequently called into question. Neither did I wish to adopt the method followed by the Agnélas, Milan, and Carqueiranne experimenters, in giving a detailed report of all my sittings; this method too has its advantages and disadvantages. However exhaustive a report may be, it is difficult to indicate therein all the

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conditions of the experiment ; oversights are inevitable. Moreover, it would be useless to say that every precaution had been taken against fraud, for in enumerating such precautions, the omission of a single one would suffice to expose oneself to most justifiable criticism. Probably that very precaution was elementary and had been taken, or was considered useless and put aside deliberately ; nevertheless such circumstances would not escape criticism. We wish to convince by pointing out the exact conditions of the experiment ; but those, whom we would most wish to convince, are the very persons least prepared to judge of the conditions in which psychical experiences are obtained. These are physicists and chemists ; but living matter does not react like inorganic matter or chemical substances.

I do not seek to convince these savants ; my book is unassuming and makes no pretence of having been written for them. If they in their turn should be tempted to try for those effects which I have obtained, the methods indicated will be easily accessible to them. It is in this way they can be indirectly convinced, though to convince them is not my present aim. Others are better qualified than I am to try their hand at this most desirable but, for the moment, most difficult task.

Difficult ! Ay, and for a thousand reasons. First of all because it is the fashion of to-day to look upon these facts as unworthy of science. I acknowledge taking a delicate pleasure in comparing the different opinions which many young Savants (I beg the printer not to forget a very big capital S) bring to bear upon their contemporaries. Here is a man surrounded by deferential spectators: solemnly he hands a paper-knife to a sleeping hysterical subject, and gravely invites him to murder such or such an individual who is supposed to be where there is really only an empty chair. When the patient springs forward to carry out the suggestion, and strikes the chair with the paper-knife, the lookers-on behold a scientific fact, according to classical science. On the other hand, here is another man who, not a whit less solemnly, makes longitudinal passes upon his subject, puts him to sleep, and then tries to exteriorise the said subject's sensibility; but the onlookers in this case are not recognised as witnessing a scientific fact! I have never been able to see wherein lies the difference between these two experimenters, the one experimenting with an hysterical subject more or less untrustworthy, the other examining a phenomenon which, if it be true, may be observed without the necessity of trusting oneself solely to the honesty of the individual asleep.

In fact there is a most intolerant clique among savants. Facts it seems are of no importance when pointed out by those who stand beyond the pale of official science. Unfortunately, psychical phenomena cannot be as easily and readily demonstrated as the X-rays or wireless telegraphy, incontestable facts which any one can prove to his entire satisfaction. Therefore young savants rejoice in making an onslaught on those who apply themselves to the study of these phenomena. It was the same thing in olden times when budding theologians made their *débuts* in the arena of theology against notorious arch-heretics, Arians, Manicheans, or gnostics. *Nil novi sub sole.*

. . . . . .

I readily admit that many, who turn their attention to the curious phenomena of which I am going to speak, frequently lay themselves open to criticism. Sometimes they are not very strict concerning the conditions under which their experiments are conducted: they trust naïvely, and their conviction is quickly formed. I cannot too forcibly beg them to be on their guard against premature assertions: may they avoid justifying Montaigne's saying, 'L'imagination crée le cas.' My remark is more particularly addressed to occult, theosophical, and spiritistic groups. The first-named follow an undesirable method. Their manner of reasoning is not likely to bring them many adepts, from among those who are given to thinking deeply. In ordinary logic, analogy and correspondence have not the same importance as deduction and induction. On the other hand it does not seem to me prudent to consider the esoteric interpretation of the Hebrew writings as being necessarily truth's last word. I do not see why I should transfer a belief in their exoteric assertions to a belief in their talmudistic or kabbalistic commentaries. I can hardly believe that the Rabbis of the middle ages, or their predecessors, Esdras' contemporaries, had a more correct notion of human nature than we have. Their errors in physics are not valid security for their accuracy in metaphysics. Truth cannot be usefully sought in the analysis of a very fine but very old book: all occult speculations upon secret hebraic exegeses seem to me but intellectual sport, to the results of which the words of Ecclesiastes might well be applied: *Habel habalim vekol habel.*

I may pass the same criticism upon theosophists.

The curious mystical movement to which the teachings of Madame Blavatsky, Colonel Olcott, and Mrs. Besant have given birth in Europe and in America has not yet been arrested. Many cultured minds and refined intelligences have allowed themselves to be led away by the neo-buddhistic evangile; doubtless they find what they look for in the 'Secret Doctrine' or in 'Isis Unveiled.' *Trahit sua quemque voluptas.* I cannot help thinking that the Upanishads have no more a monopoly of truth than the Bible has, and that every philosophy ought to hold fast to the study of Nature if it wishes to live and progress. This is, moreover, the advice of a man whom theosophists and occultists alike respect—I mean Paracelsus—'Man is here below to instruct himself in the light of Nature.'

That is what spiritists claim to do. Their philosophy, to use the term which they themselves employ to designate their doctrine, is founded, they say, upon fact and experience. It is not a revelation, contemporary with the splendour of Thebes or the pomp of Açoka's court, which gives the foundation to their dogmas. It is an everyday revelation, a real, continuous, and permanent revelation. Their ideas concerning our origin and destiny, their certitude of immortality and the persistence of human individuality, are due to well-informed witnesses. These are no less than the spirits of the dead, who come to enlighten them and to tell them what is done in the hereafter.

I envy them their simple faith, but I do not altogether share it. I am persuaded that our individuality has an infinitely longer period given it for its evolution than one human existence. But it is not from spiritistic seances that I have derived my belief; no, my belief is of a philosophical kind, and is the result of pondering over what I know of life, of nature, and of the extremely slow development of the human species. It is true the knowledge I possess is limited, and my belief wavers; yet the probabilities seem to me favourable to the persistence of that mysterious centre of energy which we call individuality.

This opinion, however, has not been derived from spiritistic communications: I think these have an origin other than that given them by Allan Kardec's disciples.

Naturally I am only speaking of my own personal experience; I do not permit myself to pronounce as erroneous those convictions based upon facts not seen by myself. Therefore I do not wish to say that spiritists are always the victims of delusion; I can only say that the messages, received by me and purporting to come from the other side of the grave, have seemed to me to emanate from a different source.

At the same time, to be exact and sincere I ought to add that, if my conviction has not been won, I have observed in one or two circumstances certain facts which have left me most perplexed.

Unfortunately for spiritism, an objection, which seems to me irrefutable, can be made to the spirits' teaching. In all parts of Europe, the 'spirits' vouch for reincarnation. Often they indicate the moment they are going to reappear in a human body; and they relate still more readily the past avatars of their followers. On the contrary, in England the spirits assure us that there is no reincarnation. The contradiction is formal, positive, and irreconcilable. Those who are inclined to doubt the correctness of what I affirm have only to glance through and compare the writings of English and French spiritists; for example, those of Allan Kardec, Denys, Delanne, and those of Stainton-Moses. How are we to form an opinion worthy of acceptance? Who speak the truth? European spirits or Anglo-Saxon spirits? Probably spiritistic messages do not emanate from very well-informed witnesses. Such is the conclusion arrived at by Aksakoff, one of the cleverest and most enlightened of spiritists. He himself acknowledges that one is never certain of the identity of the communicating intelligence at a spiritistic sitting.

Although I do not share the views of occultists, theosophists, and spiritists, I can indeed say that their groups—at least those which I have frequented—are composed of people worthy, sincere, and convinced. Occultists and theosophists devote themselves perhaps more particularly to the development of those mysterious faculties which, according to them, exist in man, while spiritists are more inclined to call forth communications from their spirit friends, but the anxious care of one and all is the moral development of their groups.

Solicitude for the ethical culture of humanity is characteristic of these mystic groups. Occultism and theosophy draw their recruits more especially from intellectual centres; the circle of spiritism is much wider. The simplicity of its teachings and methods attracts those who shrink before the personal edification of a creed: for it is a painful undertaking and a heavy task for each individual to form his own philosophy. It is more convenient to accept indications which are already made, and to believe affirmations which are—in appearance—sincere and well informed. Long centuries of religious discipline have accustomed the human mind to certain acts of faith, and to shun all free discussion, as soon as there is any question of future destinies. It is difficult to shake off this atavism.

This is what makes the success of spiritism ; it comes at its appointed time, and supplies a wide-felt need.

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The psychological condition of society to-day is of an extremely perturbed nature, as slight reflection will suffice to show. Much has been said of the conflict between science and religion, but the truth has not yet been sounded. It is no ordinary conflict which is now taking place between science and revelation : it is a life-and-death struggle. And it is easy to foresee which side will succumb.

It even seems as though the final death-struggles of Christian dogma had already set in. What man, sincere and unbiased in his opinions, could repeat to-day the famous *credo quia absurdum*? Are we not insulting the Divinity—if He exists—when we refuse to make use of His most precious gifts? when we abstain from applying the full force of our intelligence and reason to the examination of our destiny and our duties to ourselves and to others?

This abdication is nevertheless demanded of us—by Roman Catholicism for example, which exacts unqualified adhesion to its dogmas, blind belief in its Church's teachings, blind belief in the affirmations of its infallible pope. It seems to me inadmissible that the God of Roman Catholics should approve of such indifference.

It is obvious that I do not wish to write a history of ecclesiastical controversy. I have too much respect for others to allow myself to attack what are still widely accepted creeds. My duty is but to study the general aspect of revelation, and to draw therefrom such conclusions as are necessary to my acquirements.

It is an easy study. The most enlightened intellects stand aloof from revealed religions. I mean the majority, for there is still a small minority which remains faithful to dying creeds.

Even the less cultivated intelligences are beginning to feel the insufficiency of revelation. The Divinity's incarnation and death, in order to redeem a race so unworthy of such a sacrifice, begins to astound them; they wonder at such solicitude for the inhabitants of one of the least important spheres in the universe. They are also surprised at the inexorable severity of a God who, before granting pardon to mankind, demands his only son's death; a God who, for the petty trespasses of beings far removed from himself, demands an eternity of suffering as chastisement for such ephemeral insults. All this fails to satisfy those souls who are enamoured of truth and justice. These dogmas give man a cosmical importance which he does not possess, and imputes to God a susceptibility and cruelty altogether unworthy of the Supreme Being.

We could easily find other examples; but I do not think it necessary to bring them to bear upon my conclusion; a conclusion, moreover, which is admitted by the clergy themselves, who complain unceasingly of society's growing indifference.

But is society really so indifferent? I do not think so. We find indifference among the richer and more cultured classes, where some give themselves up to pleasure, others to science, in reality each one seeking only that which will amuse or interest him or herself; but those who are without resources, those whom life molests and wearies, those who are afraid at the idea of death and annihilation, those who have need of some consolation, of some hope, those people are not indifferent. If these forsake the churches and temples, it is because they do not find therein what they are seeking. The spiritual nourishment offered them has lost its savour; they ask for something more substantial and less contestable.

Besides, even in the most highly cultured classes, this need begins to make itself felt. Such men as Myers, Sidgwick, Gurney, to speak only of the dead, took up the study of psychical phenomena with the desire of finding therein the proof of a future life. Myers died after having found—or thought he had found—the sought-for demonstration.

Professor Haeckel of Jéna drew up a philosophy for himself! His materialistic monism is the outward expression of his belief: but this is also ill-adapted to satisfy that longing, the extent and force of which I have just touched upon.

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Now spiritism lays claim to satisfying these longings; and it does satisfy them, when only simple souls are concerned, simple souls who do not dream of life's complexities. The phenomena of spiritistic seances—and these are real phenomena—are the miracles which come to confirm the spirits' teachings. Why should they doubt?

Therefore the clients of spiritism are increasing in number with extraordinary rapidity. The extent to which this doctrine is spreading is one of the most curious things of the day. I believe we are beholding the dawn of a veritable religion; a religion without a ritual and without an organised clergy, and yet with assemblies and practices which make it a veritable cult. As for me, I take a great interest in these meetings; they give me the impression that I am assisting at the birth of a religious movement called to a great destiny.

Will my anticipations be realised? The future alone can tell. My opinion has been formed on impartial and disinterested observation. Notwithstanding the sympathy that I feel for those groups which have been kind enough to admit me into their midst, notwithstanding the friendship which binds me to many of their members, I have never wished to be of their propaganda, nor even to allow them to think that I shared their views. I have always plainly told them that I was by no means convinced of the constant intervention of spirits; I have not concealed from them that other and, as I thought, more probable explanations could be given to the phenomena they witnessed; perhaps they have appreciated my frankness. In any case, I am very grateful for the courtesy and kindliness with which they allowed me to observe the phenomena at their sittings, to listen to their mediums' teachings, and to express my opinions, which are so unlike their own.

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I am neither spiritist, nor theosophist, nor occultist.

I do not believe in occult sciences, nor in the supernatural, nor in miracles. I believe we know as yet very little of the world we are living in, and that we still have everything to learn. The cleverest men in all epochs show an unconscious tendency to suppose that facts, which are incompatible with their ideas, are supernatural or false. More modest but also more cruel, our forefathers, the theologians and lawyers, burnt sorcerers and magicians without accusing them of fraud : to-day most of our savants, being more affirmative and less rigorous, accuse mediums and thaumaturgists of fraud, but without condemning them to the stake. In reality their state of mind is the same as that of the ancient exorcists ; they have the same intolerance, and the different treatment meted out to their subjects is only due to the progressive improvement in manners and customs.

Even those savants who are the most interested in psychical research are afraid of confessing their curiosity. It requires the broad-mindedness of a Crookes or a Lodge, of a Duclaux or a Richet, of a Rochas or a Lombroso to dare to take a stand and openly show an interest in this field of research. Some day, however, these same suspicious researches will be their experimenters' best claim to fame. The present attitude of official science towards medianic phenomena is to be regretted ; its scientific 'cant' has grievous results. The history of the International Psychological Institute is instructive in this respect. What a pity that such learned, remarkable, and competent men, as Janet for example, should have shrunk from the epithet 'psychic' ! The need for a *psychical* institute existed, not a psychological one, of which there are already enough.

It is precisely the attitude of respectable scientific circles which appears to me a mistake, demanding rectification. I understand perfectly and excuse this attitude. For so many incorrect things have been affirmed, so many ridiculous practices have been recommended by the leaders of the occult movement, that official representatives of science must have felt indignant. Unfortunately no one except Richet has ventured to do for the phenomena vouched for by occultists and spiritists, what Charcot has done for the magnetisers' allegations. No doubt, this other Charcot will come when the time is ripe.

The preparatory work will have been done, and he need only resume the experiments of Richet, Crookes, Lodge, Rochas, Ochorowicz, and many others.

I class myself with these experimenters. Many of them are my friends, and, if our manner of thinking be not quite the same, my ideas upon the method to be used are much the same as theirs. And thus I find myself quite naturally led to say what my ideas are.

I believe in the reality of certain phenomena which I have been able to verify over and over again. I see no need to attribute these phenomena to any supernatural intervention. I am inclined to think that they are produced by some force existing within ourselves.

I believe also that these facts can be subjected to scientific observation. I say observation and not experimentation, because I do not think that it is yet possible to proceed on veritable experimental lines. In order to experiment one must understand the conditions necessary to produce a given result; now, in our case, we have a most imperfect knowledge of the required conditions, which are, nevertheless, necessary antecedents to the sought-for phenomena. We are in the position of the astronomer who can put his eye to the telescope and observe the firmament, but who cannot provoke the production of a single celestial phenomenon.

My position is therefore very simple. It is that of an impartial observer. The occult sciences and spiritism never aroused my curiosity, and I was more than thirty years of age, when my attention was drawn towards psychical phenomena. I did not even try to turn a table before I was thirty-five, considering such facts as unworthy of serious examination. It is only since 1892 that I have become interested in these researches.

I cannot remember to-day how I was led to take up the study; it was not abruptly. I am certain that no striking incident was ever responsible for a sudden changing of my mind. As far as my recollection goes, I think it was the chance perusal of some theosophical works, which made me curious to know the extent of a mystical movement, whose existence I had not even suspected. My discoveries astonished me, for I never thought that mysticism could find adherents at the end of the nineteenth century. The opening address pronounced by me at the Court of Appeal at Limoges in 1893 was upon this subject.

This address brought me many correspondents, and I was led to experiment myself. My first results were negative, and except a few interesting experiments made at Limoges with a lady of that town—a remarkable medium—and her husband, the phenomena which I observed were not of a nature to convince me. In 1895

I went to l'Agnélas, and took part in the experiments of MM. de Rochas, Dariex, Sabatier, de Gramont and de Watteville. The report of these experiments has been published in the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques.*

Surprised at these manifestations, I became filled with the desire to investigate further ; and soon afterwards curiosity prompted me to take advantage of a leisure moment to resume the l'Agnélas experiments. In 1896 Eusapia Paladino was kind enough to spend a fortnight at my house at Choisy, near Bordeaux. MM. de Rochas, Watteville, Gramont, Brincard, and General Thomassin were present at all or some of these experiments. The Attorney-General, M. Lefranc, my friend and chief, was also present at one of our sittings. M. Béchade and a Bordeaux medium, Madame Agullana, were also my guests. The results of these sittings have been noted down by M. de Rochas in a small volume which has not been made public. More and more interested, and desirous of investigating still further what I had seen with Eusapia, I begged her to pay me another visit. She consented, and returned in 1897, giving me another fortnight, this time in my home at Bordeaux. The phenomena which my friends and I obtained on that occasion were as demonstrative as before.

Eusapia is not the only medium with whom I have experimented. Madame Agullana of Bordeaux, with her customary disinterestedness, has given me many sittings : the results I obtained with her are of a different order. I also brought twice to Bordeaux the young mediums of Agen, where a previous opportunity had been given me of observing them ; at Agen their phenomena had won for their home the reputation of being haunted. Lastly, I have found some remarkable mediums at Bordeaux, among those who did me the honour of admitting me to their sittings. I also came across a large number of mediums manifesting automatic phenomena only ; these, too, were interesting in their way, for they enabled me to note and understand the difference between so-called supernatural phenomena and phenomena which are but the expression of an activity, which, in appearance at least, is extraneous to the ordinary personality.

Finally, I have frequently come across fraud. This was instructive, and I observed the fraudulent with patience and interest. The tricks of voluntary fraud deserve to be known and studied, as one is then better able to frustrate and checkmate them. Involuntary fraud—far more common than voluntary fraud—is no less instructive, for it throws a vivid light upon the curious phenomena of automatic activity.

It is not always becoming to entertain one's readers with personalities, but I think I ought to infringe a little upon decorum, in order to specify the state of mind in which I have pursued my observations. From the very beginning I was struck by a fact which seems beyond doubt. I saw that certain manifestations—to all appearances supernormal — could only be studied with the assistance of nervous and mental pathology. Therefore I went to school again, and for six years I studied assiduously clinical medicine at the University of Bordeaux. It is not within my present scope to write the panegyric of the masters to whose teachings I listened, their names would seem out of place in a book like this. But I may say that the interest which I took in my medical studies became more lively, as I understood their importance better and better. Doubtless the notions which I have acquired are most rudimentary, but however unpretentious they may be, they have enabled me to understand the mechanism of certain manifestations, and to bring a more precise judgment to bear upon their psychological value.

I am, therefore, an interested but impartial onlooker. It matters little to me if a table or a chair moves of its own accord; I have no particular desire to see them accomplish these movements. The only interest, which I find in this fact, is its truth. Its reality alone is of value to me, and I have applied myself to establish this without any possible error. My unique preoccupation has been to make sure of the reality of the phenomena which I observed. The pursuit of truth has been my sole concern.

True, I sought it in my own way; for I preferred to build my conviction upon a basis which would satisfy my intelligence and my reason, rather than impose *a priori* conditions which the experiment ought to satisfy in order to convince me. I am ignorant of most of these conditions, and I think that every one else is also. Consequently, I consider it imprudent to establish beforehand the conditions under which the experiments are to be made, in order to merit being recorded. It might just happen, that one of the conditions thus laid down rendered the experiment impracticable. Therefore I have observed rather than experimented.

My manner of proceeding has been productive of many happy results; for the curious phenomena which I have been able to observe are capricious; they shun those who would force them, and offer themselves to those who wait for them patiently. This behaviour, this spontaneity, is not the least astonishing feature in this line of observation.

I have always thought that there was nothing of a supernatural order in these phenomena. My conclusions have not changed ; but let us understand the meaning of this expression. I do not mean to say that these phenomena are always in accordance with nature's laws such as we understand them to-day. I am certain that we are in the presence of an unknown force ; its manifestations do not seem to obey the same laws, as those governing other forces more familiar to us ; but I have no doubt they obey some law, and perhaps the study of these phenomena will lead us to the conception of laws more comprehensive than those already known. Some future Newton will discover a more complete formula than ours.

My position, therefore, seems to me to be well defined. I have held myself aloof from those who denied upon bias, and also from those who asserted too rashly. I have remained within the margin of science. I have endeavoured to bring to bear upon my experiments methods of scientific observation. I wish to go in neither for occultism, nor for spiritism, nor for anything mysterious or supernatural. Many who know me imperfectly may think that I have given reins to my imagination, that I am an adept in theosophy, neo-martinism, or spiritism. Such is not the case. I seek, and I have found—very little ; others have been more fortunate than I. Some day perhaps I shall have the same good luck. But I shall not touch upon what others have done, save as an accessory ; I shall only speak of what I myself have seen and what I myself think. My book is the statement of a witness—it has no other signification.

One word in conclusion. A great number of my experiments have been made with people who wish to preserve their incognito. I have never been wanting in discretion when this was asked of me, and have never disclosed the names of those who placed their confidence in me, permitting me to experiment with them whilst desirous of remaining unknown. I have sometimes found very remarkable mediums among these anonymous experimenters. Some of my sittings with them have been truly admirable on account of the clear, distinct nature of the phenomena obtained. I beg these trusting friends to accept my heartfelt thanks.

May my book have the good fortune to contribute, however feebly, towards removing the prejudices which keep away so many likely experimenters from these studies and researches. These prejudices are manifold: there is the fear of ridicule, the religious scruple, the delusive dread of nervous or mental disease, the terror of an unknown world peopled with strange, mysterious beings. But time will dispel all this, and I believe that a day will come, when these facts—well studied, well observed—will change our conceptions of things in a way little dreamt of to-day. The sphere of 'Psychical Science' is unmeasurable. A few pioneers only are exploring therein to-day; when the land has been tilled and cultivated it will yield, I am sure, a wonderful crop—the harvest will surpass the dreams of imagination.

But let those who, thanks to a scientific education, are particularly well qualified to undertake these studies, cease to consider them unworthy of their attention. In holding themselves aloof they commit a mistake which they will bitterly regret some day. Allowing even that the first experimenter may be guilty of mistakes, there will always remain something out of the facts which they have observed. Mistakes are unavoidable in the *début* of a new science: the methods are uncertain, and the novelty of the phenomena makes their analysis difficult; time, labour in common, and experience will remedy these inevitable inconveniences.

It would be very easy to give examples of the delay which scientific prejudice has brought to bear upon scientific progress. This criticism has already been very frequently and wittily made. Even those men, whose discoveries have placed them at the head of the intellectual movement of their generation, are not altogether free from blame, yielding too often to the deplorable tendency of converting natural laws into dogmas. They commit the same fault they object to in theologians. Man has a wonderful aptitude for laying hold of his neighbours' faults and remaining blind to his own, and probably it will be so for a long time to come. I would like to see science rid itself for good and all of this theological habit of mind.

Science has only to think about facts. There should be no distinction made between the various phenomena observed: it is not beseeming to adopt certain facts, and refuse analysis to others, excluding them on the ground, for example, that their examination belongs to religion. Every natural fact ought to be studied, and, if it be real, incorporated with the patrimony of knowledge. What matters its apparent contradiction with the laws of nature, such as we understand them to-day? These laws are not principles superior to our experience; they are but the expression of our experience: our knowledge is very limited and our experience is still young — it will grow, and its development will bring the inevitable consequence of a corresponding modification in our conception of nature. Therefore, let us not be too positive of the accuracy of present ideas, and arbitrarily reject everything which we think runs counter to them. Do not dogmatise; let our only care be the impartial search for truth. Nothing will better enable us to understand the surroundings in the midst of which we are evolving than facts, which are apparently irreconcilable with current ideas: these facts betoken that the ideas are erroneous or incomplete; their attentive observation will reveal a more general formula which will explain at one and the same time the new and the old. And thus from antithesis to synthesis, more and more universal, our scientific ideas will tend towards absolute truth.

Alas! how far away from this ideal do we seem to be to-day! *Laboremus!*

CHAPTER I

METHOD

A French proverb says, 'we must have eggs to make an omelette': in order to be able to study psychical phenomena we must have psychical phenomena. This seems an elementary proposition, and yet it is the very one we most readily overlook. I have already said why and wherefore.

Therefore, I deem it necessary to indicate at once the methods which have appeared to me to give the most favourable results. Those of my readers who may wish to verify the accuracy of my conclusions will, I am sure, have the opportunity of doing so, if they operate as I have done. First of all, I must warn them against caring for the world's opinion. They must not be afraid of exposing themselves to ridicule. No doubt there is temptation to make a jest of the methods which I advise; but I strongly recommend them to think about the result, and not about the means used to obtain that result.

Psychical phenomena are of two orders: material and intellectual. The methods best suited to the study of the first are not, in my opinion, adapted to the study of the second. There is a distinction, therefore, to be made in the beginning between these two categories of facts.

Physical phenomena are the least frequently met with; they include :—

1. Knockings or 'raps' on furniture, walls, floors, or on the experimenters themselves.

2. Sundry noises other than raps.

3. Movements of objects without sufficient contact to explain the movement produced. There is here a distinction to be made between (*a*) movements produced without any contact whatever—*telekinesis* : *e.g.* the rising or sliding of a table or chair, the swaying of scales, etc., without their being touched; and (*b*) movements with contact, which is insufficient to explain them—*parakinesis* : *e.g.* the levitation of a table on which the experimenters lay their hands.

4. *Apports* : that is to say, the sudden appearance of objects—flowers, sweets, stones, etc.—which have not been brought by any of the assistants. This phenomenon—if it exists—supposes, in addition, the following :—

5. Penetrability, or the passage of matter through matter.

6. Visual phenomena, which are themselves subdivided into :—

   (*a*) Vision of the odic effluvium.
   (*b*) Amorphous lights.
   (*c*) Forms, either luminous or non-luminous.
   (*a*) Lastly, the most complete phenomenon of all—the materialisation of a form, human or otherwise, luminous or not.

7. Phenomena which leave permanent traces, such as imprints.

8. Alteration in the weight of material objects or of certain people : levitation.

9. Perceptible changes in the temperature: sensation of cold or heat ; spontaneous combustion.

10. Cool breezes.

Such are the chief psychical phenomena of the material order, which have been pointed out by different experimenters. I have not verified all of them : raps, telekinetic, and a few luminous phenomena are all I have obtained in a thoroughly satisfactory manner.

Intellectual phenomena are those which imply the expression of a thought. I will class them in the following manner :—

1. Typtology : the table, upon which the experimenters lay their hands, leans to one side and recovers equilibrium by striking the ground.

2. Grammatology or spelt-out sentences. Various methods may be used. The principal are :—

(*a*) Repeating the alphabet until a rap indicates the letter to be retained ;

(*b*) Pointing out the letters of the alphabet by means of a pencil or stiletto, etc., until a rap indicates where to stop ;

(*c*) Finally, the designation of the required letters by an index-hand on a pivot fixed in the middle of a circle composed of the alphabet, the index-hand moving with or without contact.

3. Automatic writing : *immediate*, when the subject writes without the intermedium of an instrument ; *mediate*, when he uses an instrument, such as a planchette, a wooden ball with handles fastened to it, a basket,

a hat, a stand, etc. In this case, several people can combine their action by laying their hands all together upon the object to which the pencil is attached.

4. Direct writing : *i.e.* writing which appears on slates, paper, etc., whether in or out of sight of the experimenters. If the letters seem to be formed without the aid of a pencil we have *precipitated writing*.

5. Incarnation or 'control': the subject, when asleep, speaks in the name of some entity or order, which *possesses* him.

6. Direct voices: when words are heard, appearing to emanate from vocal organs other than those of the persons present; some experimenters are supposed to have conversed in this way with materialised forms.

7. Certain automatisms other than writing are observable : *e.g.* crystal- and mirror-gazing ; audition in conch-formed shells; sundry hallucinations, *telepathy* and *telesthesia* : 'the communication of impressions of any kind from one mind to another, independently of the recognised channels of sense'; perception at a distance of positive impressions. These phenomena bring in their train *clairvoyance* or *voyance*, and *lucidity*, expressions which are by no means identical. Lucidity designates more particularly the faculty which certain people have, in magnetic sleep or in somnambulism, of getting exact impressions in a supernormal manner ; clairvoyants or voyants are those who see forms invisible to other people. *Clairaudience* denotes phenomena of the same kind in the auditory sphere.

I have paid scarcely any attention to these intellectual phenomena, with the exception of automatic writing, crystal-gazing, typtology, and 'control.' If I have taken greater interest in material than in intellectual phenomena, it is because they struck me as being more simple and easier to observe. This sentiment is not that of all experimenters, and my colleagues of the London Society for Psychical Research appear to be more affirmative in their conclusions, concerning survival after death and communication with the dead, than in their opinions on material phenomena. My personal experience has not led me to the same ideas.

Undoubtedly, experiments demonstrating the persistence of human personality after death would have an interest, in comparison with which all others would be blotted out. But the analysis of phenomena of this kind raises difficulties, which are much more complicated than is the simple observation of a physical fact. Intellectual phenomena always suppose some kind of motor automatism or other; of course, I am not speaking of manifestations where the will of the sensitive intervenes: this automatism is manifested by language, writing, or the less elevated motor phenomena, typtology for example; it may also be sensory and manifest itself in hallucinations of various kinds. To understand the infinite complication of intellectual phenomena it suffices to indicate the conditions under which they are observed. Before admitting that the cause of the apparent automatism is foreign to the sensitive, we must be able to eliminate with certitude the action of his personal or impersonal conscience. To what extent does the subliminal memory intervene?—a first difficulty which is scarcely solvable!

But supposing it to be solved, the problem still remains almost intact. If the knowledge of a positive fact, certainly unknown to the medium, appears in his automatic communications, we must not thereupon conclude that this knowledge is due to the intervention of a disincarnated spirit. Telepathy may be able to explain it. Telepathy is, as we know, the transmission of an idea, an impression, a psychical condition of some kind or other from one person to another. We are altogether ignorant of its laws, and nothing warrants the assertion, that if telepathy is a fact—as appears most probable—it is therefore necessary that any particular motive condition should exist in the agent. We may suppose with just as much reason, that the existence of a souvenir in one mind can be discovered and recognised by another, under conditions solely depending on the mental state of the percipient. This is, properly speaking, telesthesia. Now it is very difficult to prove that the fact, of which automatism marks the knowledge, is unknown to everybody. It is even impossible to prove it. But supposing this were done, there would always remain the possibility of attributing the communication to some being other than human: by admitting even the existence of spiritual or immaterial beings distinct from ourselves, nothing warrants us to affirm that such beings are our deceased relatives or friends and not some facetious Kobolds.

Prediction and precognition, of which I have had proof, raise just as complicated questions as the preceding ones. I confine myself to recording without trying to explain these facts.

Therefore, I have given my preferences to the study of physical phenomena, because in such I have not to consider the mental condition of the subject, nor have

I any of those delicate analyses to make, the complexity of which I have just mentioned. I have to defend myself against only two enemies, the fraud of others and my own illusions. Now, I feel certain of never having been the victim of either. When, for example, in the refreshment-room of a railway-station, in a restaurant, in a tea-shop, I have observed, in broad daylight, a piece of furniture change place of its own accord, I have a right to think I am not in the presence of furniture especially arranged to produce such effects. When the unforeseen nature of the experiment excludes the hypothesis of preparation, when, by sight and touch, I make sure of the absence of contact between the experimenters and the article which is displaced, I have sufficient reasons for excluding the hypothesis of fraud. When I measure the distance between the objects before and after the displacement, I have also sufficient reason for excluding the hypothesis of the illusion of my senses. If this right be refused me, I should really like to know how any fact whatever can be observed. No one is more convinced than myself of the frailty of our impressions and the relativity of our perceptions; nevertheless, there must be some way of perceiving a phenomenon in order to submit it to impartial observation. Besides, the supposed reproach of illusion cannot be applied in a general sense; to admit its justice would be to do away with the very foundations of our sciences. It can only be applied to me as an individual, and I willingly admit that it is impossible for me to exculpate myself. In vain might I plead that I am persuaded of the regularity of my perceptions, in vain assert that I observe no tendency to illusion in myself, my testimony would remain none the less suspected.

Consequently, I have but one reply for those who mistrust my qualifications as an observer, and that is to invite them to take the trouble of experimenting on their own account, using the methods which I have adopted. If, *a priori*, they wish to lay down their own conditions, they run the risk of receiving no appreciable results. When they have obtained a few plain facts they will be able to vary the conditions of experimentation, and satisfy the legitimate exigencies of their own reason. That is what I did, and if I cannot solemnly affirm the reality of the phenomena which I have observed, I can at all events affirm my personal conviction of their existence. Maybe I am showing an exaggerated mistrust of myself by thus only affirming my subjective conviction, and in not venturing to affirm with a like energy the objective reality of the things I have seen. Yet I trust no one will blame me for my prudent reserve. What man can say he has never made a mistake?

Only those, who put themselves in the same conditions which enabled me to make my observations, have a right to criticise those observations.

To criticise without experience is unreasonable, and I recognise no competence in those judges whose decisions are made without preliminary information. For the rest, I have no wish to convert any one to my ideas, and am indifferent—respectfully indifferent, if you like—to the judgment which may be formed about me.

The methods recommended by diverse occult schools vary a great deal. Theosophists do not reveal to the profane the means they use to obtain supernormal facts. This discretion astonishes me, for the theosophical society is filled with a lively spirit of propagandism. It has its chief centre at Adyar, and lodges or branches everywhere. The theosophical reviews venture to discuss the most elevated problems of philosophy, and are not at all sparing of the most extraordinary revelations of esoteric teaching; but they are remarkably sparing of practical indications.

Theosophical phenomenonalism appears to derive inspiration from Hindu-Yogism. I do not know the rules of training to which Yogis submit themselves. The most severe abstinence seems to be recommended them. Adepts are generally initiated by their Gurus or masters, and I have not been fortunate enough to be the chela of an initiated.

The French occultists who are connected with Eliphas Levy by Papus (Dr. Encausse), Guaita, Haven, Barlet, Sédir, recommend the practice of magic. Descriptions of the necessary magical material will be found in treatises by Papus and Eliphas Levy. The results which the Magi relate having been obtained are so vague, that I have had no curiosity to put into practice the strange proceedings of magic ceremonial recommended by them. These have a serious inconvenience; namely, to strike the imagination of credulous folk, and to facilitate auto-suggestion, sensorial illusions, and hallucinations. To accomplish the rites, moreover, it is necessary to dispose of rooms arranged in a particular way, and to submit oneself to a severe diet for a certain time. This makes it a complicated matter. Well, I must admit I was ashamed to try these methods. I lacked the courage to don the cloak and the linen robe, to trace the circle, and with lighted lamp and sword in hand await visions about to appear in the smoke arising from the burning incense. I own I was perhaps wrong not to try what are apparently the less rational methods. Only caring for the result obtained, I certainly would not have hesitated to resort to white or even black magic, had I had any reason whatsoever to anticipate a positive result. In order to obtain an observable fact, I would not have hesitated laying myself open to ridicule. But the statements of experimenters of the occult school seemed to imply a poverty of practical results. If the magi of the present day had realised some operation easily accessible to observation, they would not have omitted acquainting us of the fact in one or other of their numerous reviews. Their silence struck me as significant.

Moreover, the very essence even of Hermetic doctrines, openly professed by occultists, is opposed to all such divulgence. The ancient doctrine exacted initiation. The Rosicrucians, if I am not mistaken, could only initiate an adept. Then again, they were allowed to use this privilege only upon attaining a certain age, and when convinced of having found a discreet and trustworthy pupil. All that publicity made to-day about Hermetic sciences is the actual negation of their first precepts. These indiscretions bring to my mind the words of one of my predecessors at the Bordeaux Court [successor of the ancient Parliament of Guyenne], the President Jean d'Espagnet, one of the three or four adepts who pass for having unriddled the great arcanum. '*Facilia intellectu suspecta habeat*,' he says, speaking to the seeker, '*maxime in mysticis nominibus et arcanis operationibus; in obscuris enim veritas delitescit; nec unquam dolosius quam quum aperte, nec verius quam quum obscure, scribunt philosophi.*'

Then, again, I had a decisive reason for choosing spiritistic methods: they are not mysterious and they require no special subjective preparation. They are simple—in appearance, at least—and can be easily applied. Spiritists, and certain experimenters who have adopted their methods without sharing their theories, affirm having obtained surprising results. Therefore, I had nothing better to do than choose these same methods. Because of their simplicity, and the multiplicity of certified results, I considered it preferable to adopt the methods of spiritists. I will, therefore, indicate how I experiment when I am free to direct the sittings—which, unfortunately, is not always the case.

I shall divide my indications into three wide categories: 1. Material Conditions; 2. Composition of the Circle; 3. Methods of Operation.

I will add that these indications are not absolute.

I. MATERIAL CONDITIONS

Results are generally better, when operations are carried on in a room whose dimensions do not exceed 15 to 20 square yards in area, and 12 to 15 feet in height. Smaller rooms may be used, but then the heat is sometimes trying.

The *temperature of the room* is an important factor. Heat, although it may inconvenience the experimenters and the medium, appears to exercise a favourable influence on the emission of the force. On the contrary, cold is an element of non-success. Of course, I am speaking of the temperature of the room. I would advise operating in a temperature of from 20 to 25 degrees centigrade. It is decidedly necessary to avoid having cold hands and feet.

In winter the seance-room should be thoroughly warmed and the fire allowed to go out before the sitting, in case luminous phenomena should be forthcoming.

I fancied I saw an advantage, especially for movements without contact, in operating in an uncarpeted room. The carpet not only seems to be a bad element generally, it also hinders the gliding movements of the table, which are often only very slight.

As for exterior meteorological conditions, I have noticed that a dry cold favours the production of psychical phenomena: it is, I believe, the temperature *optima*. In any case, the dryness of the air is a very good condition. I have noticed that the phenomena were more easily obtained, when outside conditions favoured the production of numerous sparks under the wheels of electric trams. I have often noticed this coincidence between good sittings and the abundance of electric sparks above-mentioned. I believe that the hygrometrical state of the atmosphere is an important factor in the production of these sparks. Rain and wind are, on the contrary, causes of failure.

The lighting of the seance-room is one of the most important considerations in experimentation. Lamps and candles have the inconvenience of taking some time to light, and they do not allow of easy and rapid modification in the illumination of the room. Electric lighting is the best system, because, disposing of several lamps, it suffices to press a hand-lever in order to vary the quantity and quality of the light.

Much criticism has been passed on the particular kind of experiments I have undertaken to relate ; one of the most frequently reiterated criticisms is the reproach of always operating in obscurity. Nothing can be more inexact. As far as I am concerned, I have never considered as convincing telekinetic and parakinetic experiments made in obscurity. Those movements without contact, which have brought about my conviction, were obtained in full light, and more often in broad daylight. Of course, it is evident that darkness is necessary for the observation of luminous phenomena. To insist upon proving, in broad daylight, the reality of the delicate phosphorescences which it has been given me to observe, is a glaring contradiction.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that darkness is particularly favourable to phenomena of a physical order. On several occasions I have had the opportunity of recognising this fact under conditions, which rendered the hypothesis of fraud extremely improbable. For example, I have frequently obtained raps in the light, the number and intensity of which increased when the light was extinguished. It is the same with movements of objects without contact ; but, I repeat, obscurity is not necessary.

In a popular scientific review I once read a criticism of some experiments in which I took part — a criticism written by a medical man at Bruxelles, if my memory be correct. This doctor, a man of talent, imagined that our conclusions were founded upon experiments conducted solely in total obscurity. He committed an involuntary mistake.

Psychical phenomena can be obtained in broad daylight, and an endeavour should be made to obtain them in this way. There has been a general tendency to put out all lights in order to procure more marked phenomena. This is a wrong way of proceeding, if one seeks physical phenomena such as raps or movements without contact. We must avoid working without light, for the habit of only being able to emit the nervous force in obscurity is most easily acquired; and it is by no means easy to suppress acquired habits. Eusapia Paladino had the habit of demanding the gradual extinction of the light as her trance deepened. In 1897 I was able to get through her the same phenomena, with a certain amount of light and without the trance condition. I still remember her astonishment at obtaining, in her waking state, phenomena which, until then, she had obtained in the second state only. Sleep and darkness were the conditions this remarkable medium had become accustomed to, but they were not necessary. My first recommendation, then, is to operate with light, with as much light as possible. →

I repeat, however, that sometimes the lessening of light is desirable—often the medium demands it—even its total extinction is sometimes necessary, as, for example, when sitting for luminous phenomena. It is therefore well to have a series of graduated electric lights more or less shaded. The simpler thing is to have a *Pigeon* lamp. These petroleum lamps do not give much light, but the graduation of the light is easily effected with them. Their great advantage is this, when the electricity is turned off, their feeble light—quite sufficient in certain cases—is capable of being gradually reduced until total obscurity is obtained.

Coloured lights are often useful: I have not tried blue; yellow, violet, and green are good; while red fatigues the eyes. For certain series of experiments, I arranged my light so as to obtain white, yellow, green, or red, according to wish: the first three give sufficient illumination; it is not at all the same with red.

I strongly recommend avoiding the concentration of the luminous source. To avoid that inconvenience, dull glass may be used, or the lamps and lantern-sides may be covered with transparent paper—the quantity of light is not sensibly diminished, and the sight is less tried.

The quality of the light employed did not seem to me to have any very noticeable influence on the phenomena, yet I think my best results have been obtained in the twilight hours, or in the afternoon between five and seven o'clock, when the hard light of day had been tempered by drawing the blinds together.

The most important question after that of illumination is the choice of apparatus. I do not hesitate to say that the table is the best thing to use. However, it must not be imagined this article is an indispensable tool. Movements without contact can be obtained just as well with chairs, baskets, hats, pieces of wood, linen, etc., but a table is more convenient.

I have obtained equally good results with round or rectangular tables; the latter have perhaps given me the finest experiences. Eusapia generally uses rectangular tables; at l'Agnélas the table we used weighed about 13 kilogrammes, at Choisy 6 or 7, at Bordeaux about 7 kg. 500 grs. When sitting for raps or movements without contact, I think it is better to use lighter tables; for psychical force is mensurable : some mediums incapable of moving a table weighing ten kilogrammes may be able to obtain the levitation of a lighter one.

Some of my recent results lead me to think, there might be an advantage in using tables made with a double top, a space of three or four inches separating the two shelves. I have not experimented sufficiently to be able to express an opinion on the advantages which, theoretically, the double top seems to hold out. My impression is that the table acts something like a condenser, in which case the purpose of a double top can be understood.

The legs of the table should be separated. One-legged tables should be discarded, and especially tripods, their supervision being so very difficult. When the legs are thin and apart, observation is untrammelled.

The colour of the table did not seem to me to exercise any influence over the phenomena. I have been equally successful with black, white, red, and brown tables. They may be polished or unpolished. I do not think it matters what kind of wood they are made of, though I have obtained my finest raps with an unpolished mahogany table.

I have noticed there is an advantage in covering the table with some white material of light texture, which should not fall beyond the edges of the table more than one or two inches, as it would otherwise interfere with the experimenters' reciprocal supervision. I do not know why the presence of a cloth should be favourable to raps and movements ; at all events, it makes fraudulent raps and communicated movements much more difficult.

It is well to curtain off one corner of the room in order to form a cabinet. If the room be narrow enough, it is more convenient to stretch the curtains at the end opposite the window—an arrangement I adopted at Choisy.

The dimensions of the cabinet ought not to exceed 3 feet 9 inches to 4 feet 6 inches in width, 2 feet in depth, and 6 feet in height. I think there is an advantage in partially closing in the top.

The curtains should be made of some material of light thin texture. It is a mistake to think they should be of a dark colour; I have obtained just as good results with plain white sheets as with dark curtains.

When studying movement of objects without contact, it is useful to place in the cabinet light articles which produce a noise when shaken. The common tambourine is very appropriate for this purpose, as are also accordions, toy-pianos, harmonicas, hand-bells, etc.

The experimenters ought to sit upon wooden chairs with cane seats. Upholstered chairs are not to be recommended.

An easy-chair should be placed in the cabinet for the medium, in case he should wish to sit there. Mediums often express this wish, when in a state of 'trance' or somnambulism. I give the name of 'trance' to the sleep or torpor which is generally noticed in the sensitive, when the phenomena attain their maximum intensity. I prefer the word 'trance' to any other expression, because the condition of the entranced medium does not seem to me to be identical with that of the somnambulist; and for the particular experiments with which I am dealing, it is of interest to use terms which do not lead to confusion.

It is extremely useful to have a registering apparatus, which will allow of making graphical descriptions of certain movements. Sir William Crookes used this with success. I have not had the opportunity of using any; for I had no such apparatus at hand when I experimented with Eusapia Paladino. Later on, in a series of promising experiments, the health of the medium with whom I was operating obliged me to cease work, before I was able to make use of my registers.

I must, however, warn experimenters against the premature use of any kind of apparatus whatever. One of the most curious features of psychical phenomena is their apparent independence. The phenomena direct us; they do not allow themselves to be easily led. Often they seem to obey some will other than that of the sitters; and it is this which forms the basis of spiritistic belief; but, though I have not been able to grasp its laws, my impression is that this spontaneousness is only apparent.

Sensitives, as a rule, exhibit great repugnance to mechanical tests. This repugnance is one of the difficulties which repel the best predisposed minds, and quickly leads them to the conclusion of dishonesty, an unwarranted conclusion sometimes. I have come across many mediums, who themselves offered me every help in their power when devising test conditions. It is true these mediums are private individuals of position and education, and are extremely anxious that their psychic powers might not be made public in any way; for they do not wish to expose themselves to the criticism and abuse which is so lavishly bestowed upon mediums. This is particularly the case with ladies.

Certainly, the attacks made on Eusapia Paladino by a badly informed press and public are not encouraging to the more highly gifted mediums. I owe it to Eusapia to say that, in my experiments with her, she has always submitted to the exigencies of the most severe test conditions. If she has sometimes given me suspicious phenomena, she did so only under especial psychological conditions.[1]

Though I have not employed any registering apparatus, I have used instruments of weight and measure particularly a letter-balance—an article as convenient as it is easily employed. Each experimenter can and ought to vary the conditions of experimentation according to his wishes, within the limits which frequent experimentation will very quickly give him. The results obtained must be definite. To be satisfied with approximate results in such a matter would be absolute loss of time.

In concluding my remarks about the paraphernalia of the seance-room, I will give one more recommendation which may seem extraordinary, but which, I have reason to believe, is useful; this is that there should be no metal about the table: it is better to fasten it together with pegs rather than with nails. This is not an absolute condition, however, for I have obtained good results with nailed tables; yet my impression is that the absence of all metal is an element of success. Mediums are sometimes extremely sensitive to metals. Certain sensitives complain of their rings, which seem to make them feel uncomfortable, giving them, at times, a sensation of exaggerated heat. This brings to mind certain facts met with from time to time in our neurotic cliniques.

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[1] See Appendix B.

II. COMPOSITION OF THE CIRCLE

The most important thing in the organisation of a series of experiments is the choice of persons with whom we intend to operate. First of all, it must be remembered that without a *medium* no phenomena will be forthcoming. The presence of some one, gifted with the power of producing psychical phenomena, is perhaps the only necessary and indispensable condition of their realisation. Therefore, experimentation ought only to be seriously thought of when in possession of that *rara avis*.

What, then, is a medium? By what distinguishing features can he be recognised? It is very difficult to answer these questions.

I will give the name of 'medium' to any person capable of producing any of the phenomena previously mentioned. I adopt the word 'medium,' because it is consecrated by custom and has received the precise signification I mention. Some philosophers criticise this definition. Their criticisms are, I think, misplaced. In metaphysics it is easy to give definitions which, though elegant, are founded upon nothing. In physics—I use this word in its etymological and primitive sense—a being can only be defined by its properties. Definitions of this kind state a fact, which is all we can require of them; they serve one purpose, which is to avoid a long periphrase. Any other definition would lead to the supposition, that the veritable knowledge of the cause of the phenomena observed or of the properties recorded, was known; now, it seems to me impossible to affirm the real cause of the facts I have observed. I confine myself to stating them without forming any hypotheses.

A medium is, therefore, a person in presence of whom 'psychical' phenomena can be observed. I use this word 'psychical' with regret, because it implies a hypothesis.

As a rule it is necessary to experiment with mediums in order to discover them. Their gifts are often latent, and only reveal themselves if conditions favourable to their manifestation are supplied. This is not always the case, and there is generally a chance of coming across a medium when experimenting with persons in whose presence certain irregular abnormal noises are heard, certain movements of furniture are spontaneously produced. Such things are far from being as uncommon as one would think. This assertion may seem paradoxical, but such is not the case.

I have met with good mediums who were ignorant of the existence of their faculties; yet, when I questioned them, I discovered that they frequently heard little 'raps' upon the wood of their bed or upon their night-table, without attaching any importance to it. Others have often noticed the displacement of ordinary articles. Sometimes, but more rarely, the facts observed are so intense that the house appears to be haunted. We are often tempted to attribute to fraud the phenomena of haunting. I believe accounts of this nature are not all false, and I shall perhaps try and show this in a future work. We must not reason like one of my friends, a man of vast erudition and superior intelligence, who one day said to me: 'A little girl from thirteen to sixteen years old is always to be found in haunted houses—as soon as the little girl is taken away the phenomena cease!' Granted! Things generally happen thus; only the little girl may not be the voluntary cause of the phenomena: she may be the involuntary cause of them, a medium in activity, producing supernormal phenomena of the nature of those observed at spiritistic seances.

However, it must be admitted that it is very seldom we have the opportunity of experimenting with these, so to speak, ready-made mediums. As a rule we must try on patiently, until the longed-for phœnix has been discovered.

At the same time, I ought to point out that the chances of encountering a medium will be greater if we look for him among nervous people. It seems to me that a certain impressionability—or nervous instability—is a favourable condition for the effervescence of medianity. I use the term 'nervous instability' for want of a better, but I do not use it in an ill sense. Hysterical people do not always give clear, decided phenomena; my best experiments have been made with those who were not in any way hysterical.

Neurasthenics generally give no result whatever.

The nervous instability of which I speak is, therefore, neither hysteria, nor neurasthenia, nor any nervous affection whatsoever. It is a state of the nervous system such as appears in hypertension. A lively impressionability, a delicate susceptibility, a certain unequalness of temper, establish analogy between mediums and certain neurotic patients ; but they are to be distinguished from the latter by the integrity of their sensibilities, of their reflex movements, and of their visual range. As a rule, they have a lively intelligence, are susceptible to attention, and do not lack energy ; their artistic sentiments are relatively developed ; they are confiding and unreserved with those who show them sympathy ; are distrustful and irritable if not treated gently. They pass easily from sadness to joy, and experience an irresistible need of physical agitation : these two characteristics are just the ones which made me choose the expression of nervous instability.

I say instability, I do not say want of equilibrium. Many mediums whom I have known have an extremely well-balanced mind, from a mental and nervous point of view. My impression is that their nervous system is even superior to that of the average.

This will, no doubt, surprise many well-informed people. Medical men and psychologists, ill-disposed, as a rule, to the study of so-called occult phenomena, have the habit of looking upon all mediums as hysterics. It suffices to read the works of these savants to perceive they have never been in the presence of veritable mediums. M. Paul Janet, for example—in *L'Automatisme Psychologique*—propounds general theories which cannot be applied to every case. It is a pity such an eminent thinker should not have taken the trouble to make himself better acquainted with the facts. Perhaps he has acted like the celebrated Abbot Vertot.[1] According to

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[1] Vertot, an historian of the eighteenth century, failing to receive, when he was ready for them, the documents upon which he counted in order to write

M. Janet's theories, all mediums are on the high road to psychological disintegration: the constituent parts of their personality are dissociated under the influence of the weakening of the normal, personal activity.

I am sure the individuals observed by M. Janet have been very carefully studied by him; but I regret that my learned colleague has not encountered a genuine medium. I share his opinion concerning most spiritistic mediums; I have only found two interesting ones among them; the hundred others which I have observed have only given me automatic phenomena, more or less conscious; nearly all were the puppets of their imagination. It is outside spiritistic circles that I have discovered the best mediums.

M. Janet's criticisms are only erroneous because they are too sweeping. His conception of psychological disintegration is applicable to the greater number of cases; but it does not apply to all. It is a very different thing to study a crystal-vision, or an automatic writing revealing nothing beyond the tenor of the sensitive's memory, or to observe a premonitory vision such as has been given me to do. The indication of a future event cannot be explained by Janet's hypothesis. It reveals especial faculties that I can scarcely consider pathological, unless I consider them as such in the same way as one considers genius to be a sign of degeneration.

It is more reasonable to think that our nervous sensibility will become more and more refined. It is rash to

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his *Siege of Rhodes*, finished his work for all that; and when the documents were handed to him, he contented himself with saying: 'I am very sorry, but I have finished my siege.' He preferred leaving his work imperfect to beginning it over again.

believe that the present human type is the definite end of evolution. Our species is only one link in the series of beings; the causes, which have led up to the improvement of the human race, are still in activity, and it is logical to think there are some natures above as well as below the average. The latter represent ancestral types—a return to cast-off forms; the former are perhaps precursors, possessing faculties which are abnormal to-day, but which may become normal to-morrow.

I must pause, for I see I am forsaking the domain of facts for that of hypotheses; I hasten to return thither. I have pointed out the signs which permit us to suppose that a certain given person is a medium; although these signs are not certain, they seem to me probable. In reality, there is only one sure way of testing the faculties of a medium: that is to experiment with him.

It has been observed that certain people do not obtain phenomena when they operate alone, but obtain them, on the contrary, when with another person. I myself have not had occasion to remark this fact, but I have often noticed that the presence of certain people favoured the attainment of results, while the presence of others troubled or stopped it. I have no explanation to offer for this fact. Certainly credulity or incredulity has no influence whatever on the results of an experiment. I have seen people who were very little inclined to allow themselves to be convinced make excellent auxiliaries. At the same time, I have seen convinced spiritists make detestable co-operators.

It seems as if the faculty of giving forth this unknown force were unequally distributed, that it constitutes a physical property of the organism ; that, in relation to it, some persons will be positive and others negative, some will emit and others absorb it.

Hence the importance of the choice of co-operators—*of the composition of the circle.* The number of experimenters is comparatively unimportant ; in principle, the more numerous the circle the greater the force thrown out. But the presence of a large number of sitters is a bad condition for observation ; it also enhances the difficulty of the realisation of, what spiritists call, the harmony of the circle. But I ought to say that the finest luminous phenomena, which I have seen, have been obtained when there were from fifteen to twenty people present. On the other hand, I have had the opportunity of experimenting several times alone with a non-professional medium, when I succeeded in seeing faces which I recognised. Unfortunately, this medium—the only one with whom I have obtained this phenomenon—wishes to retain his incognito.

I think the most favourable number is from four to eight. I would urge those who wish to try to experiment to compose their circle, as far as possible, of an equal number of each sex ; it is preferable to alternate the masculine and feminine elements. These considerations lead us to the examination of methods of operation, properly speaking.

III. METHODS OF OPERATION

Before discussing in detail those methods which appear to me to be the surest, I think it well to make a few general recommendations. The first relates to the state of mind in which it is necessary to experiment. If interesting results are desired it is not advisable to laugh, joke, or mock at those practices — however ridiculous they may seem—with which I advise compliance. Act seriously, do not make light of experiments, the exact import of which we are so ignorant of. I think we should also avoid the other extreme, which we find in most spiritistic groups, and which impart to these seances all the solemnity of a religious service.

The foregoing might be considered a useless recommendation, which is not the case. Spiritists, whose experience in such matters is not to be disdained, insist on the necessity of harmony in the circle, which is, they say, an essential condition of success. My personal experience confirms their opinion on this point. I have often been present at sittings which promised well in the beginning, and became suddenly barren because of a futile discussion between the sitters. The harmony recommended by spiritists is a kind of equilibrium between the mental and emotional states of the sitters. Each sitter should be animated by the same spirit—I do not use this word in its spiritistic acceptation—and seek only the truth ; for I take it for granted they will operate as I have done. This unity of views, this uniformity of desires, this harmony between brains and hearts ensures the synergy of the forces which each member of the circle develops.

For there is no doubt that some kind of force is emitted, and that if the medium throws off more than the other experimenters, an equilibrium between him and the other sitters is nevertheless fairly quickly established. The medium takes back from the latter the force he has expended. The result is that after a successful seance, the sitters are generally tired. I have noticed that certain persons give out this force more readily than others, and this perhaps explains a medium's preference for certain experimenters as neighbours during the seance. We must not attribute this choice to the greater facility, which some people might offer for the execution of fraudulent phenomena. I have frequently been thus chosen, and I beg my readers to believe that I have a horror of fraud and imposture. I am also accustomed to experimenting ; I feel no emotion whatever ; I keep cool and observe with care. I am well acquainted with fraudulent methods, and I take good care not to be imposed upon.

I repeat, it is a mistake to attribute to fraudulent intentions the preference shown by the medium for such or such an experimenter. In reality, it seems as though the medium, possessing an organism much more sensitive than that of the majority, quickly recognises those persons who the more easily throw off the force which he requires to retrieve his losses. This more rapid emission may be the result of habit, or may even depend upon individual constitution. Eusapia quickly discerns people from whom she can easily draw the force she needs. In the course of my first experiments with this medium, I found out this vampirism to my cost. One evening, at the close of a sitting at l'Agnélas, she was raised from the floor and carried on to the table with her chair. I was not seated beside her, but, without releasing her neighbours' hands, she caught hold of mine while the phenomenon was happening. I had a cramp in the stomach—I cannot better define my sensation—and was almost overcome by exhaustion.

This, for me, extraordinary incident astonished me greatly, and since then I have always carefully examined my sensations. This examination has the fault of being purely subjective, but certain objective realities have confirmed it. A special sensation accompanies the emission of this nervous force, and with custom the passage of the energy expended in a seance can be felt, just as the interruption of its flow can be discerned. I have questioned several experimenters about this, and their observations have often corroborated mine.

Therefore I think I may say that some kind of force is emitted by the sitters, which is elaborated by the medium; that the latter restores his losses at the expense of the experimenters, that certain people more readily than others furnish the medium with the force he requires; and that a certain sympathy of ideas, views, and sentiments between the experimenters is favourable to the emission of this force.

I have no decided opinion upon the nature and origin of this force. I think it is kindred to the energy which circulates in our nerves, and which provokes the contraction of our muscles. Further on I shall give the reasons which lead me to think so.

A second recommendation, no less important than the first, in my opinion, is to treat seriously, and note carefully all communications given through the table, through automatic writing or raps.

I now arrive at the examination of one of the most curious facts which so-called 'psychical' experiences reveal. *To a certain extent* the manifesting force appears to be intelligent. Nothing permits me to affirm or even to think, that the manifestations are due to an entity distinct from that of the sitters. It is not my province to discuss hypotheses: I confine myself to the relation of facts, and in the course of my recital, I will point out in detail the circumstances, which permit me to signalise the apparent individuality of the manifesting force. As in such matters I have always thought it better to preserve an expectant attitude, I have always been careful never to slight the communications received through the phenomena. I have imposed on myself the habit of treating these manifestations in the manner desired by them. Every time I acted otherwise, the results were indifferent.

Generally, the manifestations are attributed to a deceased person, known or unknown to the sitters. This is not absolute, for I have witnessed the table call itself the devil, or even pretend to be a man still alive. Automatic writing has been signed by a Mahatma; but, as a rule, it is the soul of a deceased person who claims to be manifesting. This usual attribution explains spiritistic belief. I have good reason for thinking, that the spirits of the dead have had nothing to do with my experiments; but as, in reality, I am ignorant of the cause of the phenomena which I have observed, I have politely accepted the explanation these have given of themselves. It is thus we address those whom we meet at table d'hôte, calling them by the name they give themselves without concerning ourselves as to who they really are.

Therefore, whatever the changeable personification of the phenomena may be, my advice is to accept it and to heed its observations. We must not suppose the ideas expressed are due to the operators' unconscious movements; that may be true when the communications are obtained through automatic writing, through a table or articles with which the experimenters are in contact; but it is certainly not so when they are obtained by raps given without any contact whatsoever, as I have been able to prove many and many a time. As I confine myself to indicating the results of my personal experience, it is perhaps enough to say once more that the methods I recommend seem good to me. I have always noticed the unhappy consequences of my refusal to take into account the spontaneous advice of the personification.

The most frequently given advice concerns the placing of the experimenters.

However, at the beginning of the sitting, the experimenters may seat themselves as they please. I have already said it was generally necessary to place the medium's chair against the curtains of the cabinet, and to alternate the sexes. The experimenters seated, the experiment begins. It is a good plan to choose a manager. Nothing is worse than the absence of direction. When every one wishes to direct the proceedings, confusion reigns in the circle, and results are bad. I have been present at seances where every one spoke at the same time, each one demanding a different phenomenon. As a rule, on such occasions nothing was received. Some one, therefore, ought to be appointed to conduct the experiment, especially to converse with the personification if it express a desire for conversation.

When the sitters wish to make a report of an experiment, it is indispensable to intrust one of the experimenters with the task of taking notes of the incidents as they occur. This experimenter ought to form one of the circle.

It must not be thought that the circle can be modified with impunity. My personal experience has shown me it is bad to frequently introduce strangers into the circle. It should be arranged that a series of at least six sittings will be held without modifying the group : that no new experimenter will be admitted : and that none of the original experimenters will miss even one seance. Then if at the end of six sittings nothing has been obtained, my advice is to change the circle, to eliminate certain elements, replacing them by others. It is preferable to change the sitters one by one, and to make a few experiments with the circle thus modified before making further changes.

If interesting results be forthcoming, and a desire be felt to show them to other people, the new sitters must be introduced one by one, and, I repeat, at intervals of three or four sittings. Otherwise there would be a risk of compromising the success of the experiments.

The personification sometimes asks for the addition to the circle of a certain person ; it is then well to invite him to the sittings if circumstances allow of it.

I now return to the seance which, I suppose, has begun. The sitters put their hands on the table ; it is not generally necessary to 'form the chain,' that is to say, to establish contact between the sitters by linking the little fingers. The hands in position, and the room *well lighted up*, we wait. Talking or singing may be indulged in. The emission of the voice, especially rythmical emission, is an excellent condition: it is a good thing to play some music, organ-playing is particularly effective. Why is the production of sonorous rythmical waves favourable to these phenomena? I have no explanation to offer for this fact, which I am not the only one to have observed.

At the end of a few minutes, the table often seems to be agitated. If we are experimenting with spiritists or with people accustomed to spiritistic proceedings, the table, raising itself, will be seen to strike the floor with one of its legs. I advise asking the table if it wishes to speak, and to arrange that two raps will mean 'no,' and three raps 'yes.' Of course any other numbers or signs will do equally well. The table, thus consulted, generally replies 'yes.' It can then be asked, if the sitters are well placed: if it indicates any other arrangement it is well to heed its advice.

We should then make known to the table what kind of results are desired, and point out, particularly, that movements with contact, failing to carry conviction, are undesirable. I have already said that the personification—it is thus I call the entity, whatever it may be, who claims to be manifesting—is generally very open to suggestion; and it suffices to indicate, at the beginning of the experiment, the objection that is made to movements with contact to be almost completely rid of them.

There is no need to point out the object of the above suggestion. From the special point of view of the observation of material facts, the movement of a table upon which the hand rests means nothing at all. I look upon these movements as loss of time; they are sufficiently explained by our own unconscious and involuntary muscular contractions. The phenomenon is only worthy of a serious man's attention when it is produced without contact, or without sufficient contact; as, for example, when the table is completely raised from the ground, the sitters' hands resting on top of the table all the time. It is better not to experiment than to lose one's time in observing movements with contact, unless, of course, we are seeking to analyse the tenor of typtological messages.

I strongly recommend most carefully avoiding the production of automatic movements. I have excellent reasons for believing, that the agent which produces telekinetic phenomena only realises them, if it has accumulated sufficient force to have acquired a certain given tension. I have already pointed out the close connection —identity perhaps—between this agent and that which causes our muscles to contract; further on I shall indicate experiences which give weight to this impression; at present it suffices to mention it, to understand why I so earnestly recommend sitters to avoid yielding to more or less subconscious movements from the very outset. If, as I think, the energy which our nervous system elaborates is closely connected with that energy, whose effects are seen in telekinetic phenomena, it is probable that it will only produce these curious effects, in proportion as it is able to acquire a sufficient tension for its emission. My knowledge of physics is too rudimentary to allow me to draw precise comparisons between this force and electricity. Nevertheless, it has seemed to me to present some analogies with electricity, although the two are certainly not identical; but the analogies are, perhaps, sufficient to enable me by a comparison to make my meaning clearer.

An electrical conductor, charged with a given amount of electricity, will have an electrical density of σ; if the amount increases, this density will be σ', and we will have $\sigma' > \sigma$; the tension in the first case will be $T = 2\pi\sigma^2$, in the second $T' = 2\pi\sigma'^2$; T' will be greater than T.

The conductor will remain charged, as long as the tension does not exceed the resistance which the surroundings offer to the emission of electricity; as soon as this resistance becomes inferior to the tension, there will be emission of electricity.

In the case of a medium, the charge of energy increases with time and relative immobility. If by making unconscious or voluntary movements, experimenters do not allow this energy to accumulate, it will never reach the tension necessary for exteriorisation. There are, however, some reservations to be made; for I have noticed, that when the tension is sufficient, simulated or executed movements determine the production of the motor phenomenon—just as if the execution of the movement appeared to liberate a quantity of energy superior to that which was utilised by the working of the muscle; the excess of force was then apparently employed in the realisation of the telekinetic movement.

I have noticed that, every time we allow voluntary or involuntary movements, telekinetic movements are difficult to obtain. One would think, that the energy which determines them can only accomplish them when it cannot find a normal outlet; it has a tendency to expend itself normally in ordinary muscular movements: this tendency is one of the most frequent causes of involuntary fraud, and the habitual occasion of voluntary fraud. We must see that this tendency be checked : this may call for some effort of attention at the beginning, but ' habit is second nature.'

Things being thus regulated, we wait. A first seance is generally without apparent result, unless one has the good luck to meet with a medium straight away—which is not always the case. Those who seriously wish to understand these facts must have a great fund of indefatigable patience. I can guarantee them success sooner or later, but I cannot tell how many barren experiments may be made before that success comes. They must not grow weary ; let them progressively modify the composition of the circle until the necessary element be met with. They will then be rewarded for their trouble. I strongly advise them to avoid professional mediums. Some of them are sincere, and I think that Eusapia Paladino is of that number. It is true that sometimes she produces suspicious phenomena, but it is puerile to conclude therefrom that she constantly cheats. The suspicious cases I have observed with Eusapia are interesting, if studied impartially. They show the rôle which the subliminal conscience—impersonal or bound to a second personality—plays in the phenomena, and give rise to attractive psychological problems.

Spiritistic mediums, whose number is legion, form another category with whom we should not experiment, except for purposes of especial research. Some of these mediums are trustworthy, and one of them, Madame Agullana of Bordeaux, has sometimes given me interesting sittings. The phenomena I have observed with this medium differ greatly from Eusapia's; they are of an intellectual order, and raise a very complicated problem. Madame Agullana's medianity must not be judged from seances with her groups. These seances have the religious character of nearly all truly spiritistic meetings. It is difficult there for an experimenter to observe at his ease; the curiosity of those who seek only the objective demonstration of a fact may appear impertinent and out of place at such meetings. The faithful have a right to look upon such people as intruders. Convinced of the truth of their doctrines, they ill brook the open discussion of them at meetings, where discussion is not wanted. They prefer the discourses of an entranced medium to the needless interference of the profane. Their meetings, nearly always consecrated to the acquiring of communications, have the serious defect of developing unconscious automatism in their medium. For me this is a conclusive reason.

Madame Agullana, at some seances where only a few experimentalists took part, gave proof of the possession of certain supernormal faculties, which I have not observed in the same degree of intensity at the usual sittings of her group. This medium is also entirely reliable, and of praiseworthy disinterestedness. She never receives any remuneration—an important consideration—for, mediums who take fees are more open to suspicion.

My most convincing results have been obtained with persons unacquainted with spiritism and ignorant of its practices. Once I discovered a medium most unexpectedly. He sat down with me at a table, invited to experiment for the first time in his life. He had scarcely seated himself when violent knockings resounded on the floor; this person, honourable, well-educated and intelligent, is one of the most remarkable sensitives I have met with. But as he fears ridicule, has no desire to be scoffed at in newspapers, and, moreover, dreads publicity of any kind, he does not wish his name to be mentioned. These are the results of the malevolent criticisms heaped upon experiments of this nature.

I am sure the number of mediums is much more considerable than we think; in a circle of from eight to ten people chosen under the condition I have mentioned, it is seldom we do not find a medium.

Of whatever sex, to whatever social status he may belong, the medium is a sensitive. This must never be forgotten; and we must never lose sight of the fact, that the phenomena will be clearer and better in proportion as the medium's confidence and sympathy are won.

This statement will not surprise those who are familiar with hypnotic experimentation, for they know how easy it is to induce sleep in a person who lets himself go, and, on the contrary, how difficult it is in one who resists or who mistrusts the operator. I am persuaded that the impersonal strata of the consciousness play a rôle in psychical phenomena similar to what they play in the phenomena of hypnotism.

Therefore, I insist on the necessity for due regard being paid to the medium. I have had much practice, and in all mediums I have met with extreme sensitiveness. Those who have come under the refining influences of education, instruction, or rank, are the most sensitive—'touchy'; but this sensitiveness ought not to be interpreted as a sign of degeneracy. Certain contemporary savants consider every deviation from the normal state as a blemish ! Such a way of thinking implies a veritable *a priori* judgment, a begging of the question, which is detrimental to the true development of scientific thought. The normal man is only a mean term; there are individuals who are inferior to the mean, there are others who are superior to it. Nature knows not equality. She offers us, everywhere, inequalities, discrepancies, diversities. It is the illusory unity of our own personality, which leads us to unify and to codify natural phenomena and even humanity itself. It is one of the conditions of the organisation of our Sciences, that they become intelligible only on condition of adapting themselves to our particular form of understanding. Nothing authorises our supposing that this form of understanding has any metaphysical reality; it may only be a subjective condition of our perception.

It is by an analogous mental process, that we give reality to the intellectual or physical type of the average man. Degeneracy, which is often a sliding backwards, a relapse into inferior types, is a negative deviation from the average man: genius is a positive variation. In the same way, the nervous system of the imaginary average man is but an abstraction; in reality, the sensibility of the nervous system of the different human individualities varies immensely. A negative variation will give beings who are less sensitive, less delicate than those of the average type; a variation in the positive sense will give individuals of a more sensitive and more delicate type. To consider either as abnormal is only grammatically true: the former are *infra*-normal, the latter are *supra*-normal. The first have not reached the average level, the second have passed it.

Therefore, it is not astonishing that a more refined sensitivity of the nervous system should have a correspondingly greater emotivity : 'touchiness' in itself is a function of emotivity. This seems to me to explain a fact which appears certain—that the feelings of mediums are very easily hurt. A discontented, irritated medium is a bad instrument—as I have had occasion to prove with Eusapia and many other mediums.

I have always noticed that discontent and moral discomfort, as well as fatigue and physical discomfort in the medium brought about failure.

The advice I give is important to follow. Win the confidence and sympathy of the medium by your own sympathy, your own deference, your own loyalty. If you detect fraud, which seems voluntary to you, do not hesitate—after the sitting and at the first favourable opportunity—to tell him frankly your doubts and your impression. If you perceive an involuntary fraud, put the medium on guard against himself, always act toward him with sincerity, but at the same time with kindness and courtesy.

As already pointed out, fatigue and physical discomfort produce the same effects as moral discomfort. It is unwise therefore to experiment with a sick medium. The results would be bad from an experimental standpoint, and the medium's health would suffer. Carefully avoid experimenting too frequently with the medium. Even three sittings a week are really more than is desirable. We may experiment three times a week when operating with a medium in good form, and when the experiments are not likely to last for more than two or three weeks. It would be bad to experiment so often or for a longer period with a young sensitive. Two sittings a week seem the safest number to me ; while only one ought to be made if the medium follows a trying profession.

I have seen mediums become ill through experimenting too often. The abuse of experimentation rapidly brings on nervous breakdown, and may cause serious disorders, of which neurasthenia is the most frequent and the *least serious.* Therefore I have made it an invariable rule to experiment with non-professional mediums, only on condition that they bind themselves to experiment with no other than my own circle as long as our series of experiments lasts. I am as persuaded of the absolute innocuousness of experiments prudently conducted, as I am positive of the dangers of experimentation when frequent, prolonged, or conducted by incompetent persons. I have no fear of assuming the responsibility of the first, but for no consideration whatever would I endorse, even indirectly, the second, and I cannot too strongly recommend the same prudence to other experimenters.

A last recommendation remains to be made ; experimentation with persons of doubtful morality must be avoided. I have no need to enlarge upon the many inconveniences to which such an imprudent collaboration may expose experimenters.

To sum up the indications I have just given in perhaps too complete a fashion, I will briefly recall to mind the conditions which have seemed the best to me : sufficient light first of all—the personification must not acquire the habit of operating in darkness, for the brighter the light, the more convincing the experiment ; a small room ; a light table with four legs, put together with wooden pegs rather than with nails ; a cabinet of soft thin curtains ; the experimenters not to exceed as a rule eight in number ; the experimenters to agree to experiment seriously, without turning into ridicule the practices to which they submit themselves. It is a good plan to allow only one of their circle to direct the seance, to converse with the personification, to control the proceedings. They must try and keep up a spirit of good understanding, and refrain from reciprocally accusing each other of pushing the table—novices do this regularly. Discussion should be relegated to the end, and should never be provoked during the sitting. Finally, they should pay great attention to the susceptibility of the medium—whoever he may be.

The greatest patience will be required ; the circle should be modified with prudence, and only after a certain number of sterile experiments.

THE PERSONIFICATION

I think it will be useful to indicate what has seemed to me the best way of treating the personification—for this point is important.

I give the name of 'personification' to the manifesting intelligence, whatever this may be. As previously indicated, this intelligence, as a rule, claims to be the soul of a deceased person. This is not absolute, and the phenomena may personify God, the devil, angels, legendary personages, fairies, etc. I need not say how far I am from believing in the reality of the being thus manifesting, and I have, as I believe, excellent reasons for doubting. I have noticed that the rôle played by the personification varies with the composition of the circle. It will always be the spirit of a dead or living person with spiritists. But the rôles are more varied if the circle be composed of people who are not spiritists; it then sometimes happens that the communications claim to emanate from the sitters themselves. I am inclined to believe this is the real origin of the communications, and that a sort of collective consciousness is formed. I give my impression with the greatest reserve, for, I repeat, I have no decided opinion upon the subject; but the experiments I have made leave me that impression, in a general way. This forms part of an —as yet—undeciphered chapter on the psychology of crowds. I confess I have no explanation to give of the action which such a collective consciousness appears to have upon matter; but this difficulty seems to me less insurmountable than those attending the spirit hypothesis. If we attribute the phenomena to a being distinct from ourselves, having a will-power so much the more marked because it emanates from a spiritual being more enlightened than ourselves, I cannot understand the suggestibility of such a being. Now, I believe the personification is, as a rule, extremely suggestible. I say 'as a rule,' for there are occasions when it gives proof of remarkable obstinacy: this is the exception, and I ought to say that when the personification shows a decided will of its own, there is no struggling against it. It is absolutely necessary to follow the directions it gives, for, in such cases, there is a very good chance of obtaining happy results, while certainly nothing will be obtained by spurning those directions.

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There are very few people among those unaccustomed to this kind of experimentation, who have the courage to treat the personification as it desires to be treated: this is a mistake. We must take a practical view of the proceedings; we must lay aside all pride and vanity. I am as well aware as any one of the comical aspect of a conversation between a grave experimenter and a being non-existent, and I had much difficulty in conquering the repugnance with which this manner of proceeding inspired me. I saw therein a kind of jugglery unworthy of a cultured intellect. Experience has clearly shown me I was wrong, without, however, demonstrating the reality of the being personified. Every time I looked upon the personification as something not to be reckoned with, I have had bad or indifferent sittings.

This does not mean, that the results have always been in proportion to the attention I have paid the personification. Far from it! The personification is generally lavish of promises—excellent things in their way, but it would be extremely naïve to put absolute faith in what it says: we must trust only in ourselves. I do not know if Socrates' demon ever played him false: those of his species whom I have interviewed struck me as being of doubtful sincerity. It would be impossible to commit a greater imprudence than to put practical faith in the advice of the personification, however good it may seem to have always been.

My personal observations have generally brought me into connection with personifications possessing more imagination and good-will than respect for the truth. They have promised me marvellous demonstrations, which I am still expecting, particularly complete materialisations. Perhaps I am too hard to please, and ought to consider myself lucky to have seen what I have seen. But we are never content with our lot, and Horace's time-honoured words are as true to-day as ever they were.[1]

If I strongly recommend people not to abandon the conduct of their life or business affairs to the personification, I recommend just as strongly treating the latter with the greatest possible attention. We can only form hypotheses about its essence; and the scepticism which my observations, taken as a whole, have instilled into me, may be ill-founded; therefore it is better to treat it with the same courtesy we show our fellow-experimenters. This attitude is prudent; it is also the most profitable one. In practice, I have the same regard for the personification as for the medium. I do not call it 'dear spirit' as spiritists do, but I find I do well to make it clearly understand what I am seeking; whatever in reality the personification may be, its co-operation seems to me to be indispensable. The resemblance between the reaction of the personification and that of the subliminal consciousness is so obvious, that I have no need to enlarge upon it.

In practice, the first manifestation of this—probably fictitious—being will consist in a knocking on the floor with the leg of the table. It is well to agree upon a code of signals. The simplest is two raps for 'no,' three for 'yes,' five for the alphabet.

At the beginning, it will be difficult to avoid these knockings. I have already said it is desirable to discourage them and to induce the personification to manifest itself otherwise. It would be well to accept the typtological code of signals above mentioned for the first conversations, but to abandon it as soon as it has been clearly explained to the personification, that movements with contact are unacceptable. I am, of course, speaking under the supposition that telekinetic or parakinetic movements are desired. If the personification, at the end of five or six seances of an hour each, does not begin to produce the desired phenomena, the circle must be modified in the manner already pointed out. These modifications ought to be patiently continued, until a medium has been met with. The personification might be asked to name the sitter who is to be replaced, and, if possible, to designate his substitute. Such a designation is often very useful. Once or twice I have seen the table name persons whom, at the moment of the experiment, no one in our midst had thought of—at least consciously. Various reasons prevented the given indications from being followed, and the experiments were discontinued.

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[1] Qui fit, Mæcenas, ut nemo, quam sibi sortem
Seu ratio dederit, seu fors objecerit, illa
Contentus vivat, laudet diversa sequentes?
Satyr. I. lib. i. I.

Movements with contact can be eliminated by the process I have mentioned; their elimination, made with the consent of the personification, presents no inconvenience, unless it be done too abruptly.

I have already said that the personification is generally very open to suggestion. We must remember that this is a special kind of suggestibility. In hypnotism a commanding tone of voice gives greater force to the suggestion; it is not the same with the personification in question, which shows itself rebellious to all imperative orders. On the contrary, it readily yields to suggestions made with gentleness and persistence. As a rule, I give the object I have in view, and my reasons for setting aside all phenomena which can be explained by unconscious muscular action. I repeat, I treat the personification as a co-experimenter. It is seldom that, thus exhorted, it does not willingly consent to abstain from phenomena devoid of interest, and promise more demonstrative ones. I have already said too much faith must not be put in such promises ; at least nine out of ten experiments will come to nothing, and will have to be worked out again on fresh lines.

But the experimenter's patience will not always be tried in vain. Sooner or later he will meet with the indispensable medium ; and his observations will then be similar to mine.

The first supernormal phenomena are raps and oscillations without contact. Sometimes the phenomenon, from the very outset, will manifest itself with intensity ; this is the exception ; generally the noises and movements, feeble in the beginning, will grow in intensity. As soon as raps without contact have been obtained, certain signals must be agreed upon. The simplest way, then, is to adopt the typtological code of signals, *i.e.* two raps for ' no,' three for ' yes,' five for the alphabet. The phenomena then become very interesting, for when the raps are given without contact, the hypothesis of involuntary movements becomes insufficient to explain them.

I have recently received very intelligent communications in this way. We must not grow tired of having the words repeated. It often happens that letters are left out, or that one letter is given instead of another. This happens particularly with neighbouring letters. In carefully noting down the letters a very clear sense will often be found. For example, the raps will give MARTJN for Martin, HEORIETTE for Henriette, etc. We must not give up as soon as the word seems to become unintelligible. Wait until the sentence is finished, when it will sometimes suddenly clear itself. It sometimes happens that the letters are dictated backwards. When the sentence is incomprehensible, we must begin all over again. Even in experiments whose aim is to obtain material phenomena, we must not refuse to listen to demands for the alphabet, for the personification will then often advise on the manner of operating.

Very often the personification complains of too much light, and during several sittings insists upon darkness. We must politely resist it, and make it understand that psychical phenomena lose much of their value, as soon as they cease to be visible. I never hesitate telling the personification, that experiments of this kind are not convincing when conducted in obscurity, since the good faith of the operators is then open to suspicion, and, moreover, that phenomena can be obtained in full light. These reasons often prevail on the personification not to persist in asking for darkness.

In some cases, it is the personification itself who refuses to operate in darkness. It is with personifications of this class that I have obtained the finest results.

When the pseudo-entity asks one or other of the experimenters to leave the circle, it is prudent to yield obedience to its behest, unless, for various reasons, the required elimination be unacceptable. In that case, it is as well to explain these reasons to the personification, and then it rarely happens they are not accepted.

Such are the general rules which a fairly long experience has caused me to adopt, and I have always had reason to be glad of having followed them. In experiments conducted by me, I have never received obscene or absurd communications of which certain people complain. Reflecting, perhaps, my own state of mind, I have generally encountered personifications with scientific and serious tendencies.

I have just exposed in detail, and perhaps too minutely, the conclusions arrived at concerning the method of operation. I now come to the indication of the results which I have obtained, and the ascertainments I have been able to make.

I will examine in succession raps, movements without contact, luminous phenomena, and finally, intellectual phenomena.

CHAPTER II

RAPS

I WILL not stop to consider movements with contact. From a physical point of view they have no serious signification whatever. They are so easily explained by the combined, unconscious, muscular movements of the experimenters, that it is really not worth while stopping to examine them. The messages obtained by their intermedium may present an internal or clinical interest, but in that case they belong to the category of intellectual phenomena, properly so-called.

The first physical phenomena, which deserves attention, is that of 'raps.' It is generally the one most frequently obtained. We must, however, point out that the faculties of mediums are not identical: some produce chiefly physical, others chiefly intellectual phenomena. The former also manifest diverse qualities: some of them obtain raps, others movements, others luminous phenomena. Still in a general way 'raps' have seemed to me to be one of the simplest phenomena of a material order.

If we work with a physical medium of even only average force, raps will be heard after the third or fourth seance. They will be heard much sooner if we have a powerful medium.

As a rule, raps seem to resound on the top of the table ; but it is not always so. They are frequently heard on the ground, on the sitters, or on the furniture, walls, or ceiling. The raps I have heard—of course I am speaking only of genuine raps—have resounded near the medium, as a rule, either on the table, floor, walls, or furniture in close proximity to him.

The simplest way to obtain raps is to proceed as I have directed in section ii. chapter I. The experimenters, seated around a table, lay their hands upon it palm downwards, with outstretched fingers. This method is not, however, to be strongly recommended, for raps are easily imitated : and we must never lose sight of that fact when appreciating an experiment ; further on, I will enumerate the usual fraudulent processes. Still, even when the hands are resting upon the table, raps can be obtained of sufficient sonority to exclude the hypothesis of fraud, if not absolutely, at least with much probability.

I have received raps in full light. I have received them so frequently in vivid light, that sometimes I cannot help wondering, whether darkness facilitates their production to the same extent as it may other phenomena. It is, however, allowable to suppose, that the energy which produces them prefers accumulating force in spots that are sheltered from strong light, *e.g.* under the table, or under the floor, or in shaded corners of the room. What makes me suppose so is this, I have frequently noticed that the raps burst forth under the medium's hand, when they appeared to be produced on the top of the table.

Contact of the hands is unnecessary when sitting for raps. I have procured them quite easily, with several mediums, without such contact.

When we have succeeded in obtaining raps with contact, one of the best ways of obtaining them without contact is to let the hands rest for a certain time on the table, then to raise them *very slowly*, palms downwards, and the fingers loosely extended. Under such conditions, it seldom happens that raps do not continue to be heard for at least a short time. I need not say that experimenters should not only avoid contact of their hands with the table, but even of any part of their body or clothing. The contact of clothing with the table is sufficient to produce raps, which have nothing of a supernormal nature. We must be careful, therefore, that ladies' dresses especially do not come into contact with the table; in taking these necessary precautions, raps can be obtained under most satisfactory and convincing conditions.

With certain mediums the energy liberated is great enough to act at a distance. I once heard raps upon a table which was nearly six feet away from the medium. On that occasion we had had a very short seance, and had left the table. I was seated in an armchair, the medium was standing by, talking to me, when a shower of raps suddenly resounded upon the table we had just left. The experimenters are all personally known to me, and I am persuaded that they are above suspicion; but this circumstance is quite insufficient in itself to entail a favourable conclusion of the phenomenon, for I cannot too strongly put experimenters on their guard against blindly confiding in their neighbours.

Serious experimenters should exclude all susceptibility amongst themselves, and agree beforehand that reciprocal verification and control will be freely exercised without any one taking offence. In the case I am speaking of, the table on which the raps were heard was about six feet away from the medium and myself; it was daylight, towards five o'clock on a summer's afternoon; the table had never been touched by the medium or the experimenters before the seance; the raps were loud, and were heard for several minutes.

I have had several opportunities of observing facts of this kind. Once, when travelling, I came across a medium among my fellow-travellers. He has not given me permission to name him, but I may say he is an honourable, highly-educated gentleman, occupying an official position. He had no suspicion of his latent faculties before experimenting with me. I obtained with him loud raps in buffets and restaurants. It would suffice to observe these raps produced under the conditions this medium offered me, to be convinced of their genuineness. The unusual noise attracted the attention of persons present and greatly embarrassed us: the result surpassed our expectations, for the more we were confused by the noise of our raps, the louder they became; it was as though some one of a teasing turn of mind was amusing himself at our expense.

I have also heard, when in company with a medium, some very fine raps given on the floor in museums before the works of old masters, and especially before religious pictures. I particularly remember the intensity of certain raps I once heard when standing before a painting representing the burial of Christ,—the work of a celebrated artist. I also heard some fine raps in a house which is celebrated as having been the last home of a famous writer; in the room in which he died, the raps were so loud as to attract the suspicious attention of the guardian.

I have also heard formidable raps with the two young girls, fourteen and fifteen years of age, who were called the Agen mediums. I observed these mediums at their own home, and I also had them twice at Bordeaux, when on each occasion they remained for nearly a month. The raps produced by them are interesting, but they do not seem to me to be demonstrative. One of these girls obtained raps on the floor under her feet; I verified the apparent immobility of the foot while the raps were being produced. When the two girls were in bed, loud raps were heard near their feet, seemingly given on the wood of their bed. We were able to observe the apparent immobility of the children. Raps were also given on the blankets; we could feel the vibrations when laying our hands on the blankets; the raps appeared to be produced under our hands. I have heard diverse noises with these children in obscurity, but I draw no conclusion therefrom. I found out that they were not always sincere, and that they had a tendency to take advantage of the confidence and friendliness of the people, with whom they were staying. They have simulated some of their phenomena, especially raps in the ceiling. I have never been able to persuade these young girls to experiment at a table with sufficient conditions of light. They were accustomed to go to bed in order to procure their raps. It is true I have heard these raps in daylight, but I consider other conditions were unsatisfactory on these occasions. I regretted exceedingly that these mediums showed so little good-will, for even putting aside the greater part of the suspicious phenomena they produced, there were still some which seemed to be worthy of further examination.

I have touched upon my observation of these children because it is instructive, although it may be negative from my point of view. It shows the inconveniences of a bad method of development. I have noticed that psychical phenomena has a great tendency to repeat itself, to follow a certain routine: they tend to turn round the same axis. The children of whom I have just spoken had been allowed to acquire the habit of going to bed, in order to obtain the sonorous phenomena they appeared to produce. Therefore they were able to obtain them only under those conditions. They have never given me a 'rap' by means of a table, and yet, I am inclined to think that they, or at least that one of them, had the constitution necessary for the emission of psychic force.

My failure with the Agen mediums was not altogether devoid of interest, for I gained experience, and experience is only acquired with time, patience, and multiplicity of observations. It is useful to be able to compare good, doubtful, and bad seances.

Among my most doubtful experiences, whose recital may be as instructive as the foregoing, I will choose, for brief discussion, a recent series of seances which I held at Bordeaux. Some of the phenomena I observed seem to me difficult to explain by fraud, especially lights which floated about the seance-room; but the greater part of the motor phenomena was simulated. The personification had the habit of demanding total darkness, and as I was chiefly interested in luminous phenomena, I saw no inconvenience in putting out the lights. The personification, which made this request, was probably the personal consciousness of one of the sitters. As soon as the lights were extinguished, the raps became noticeably louder. Many of them were certainly the work of two of our number—I have not been able to analyse the mental state of these two young men : one of them, who is neurasthenic, acted perhaps unconsciously. Nevertheless, though I observed the whims of these two men with interest and attention, I noticed, at the same time, that raps were forthcoming in *total obscurity* when I made imperceptible movements, *e.g.* when I gently blew on the table, or when I pressed the hand of one of my neighbours whose sincerity I could vouch for. There was always this synchronism, which I have already pointed out, between the muscular movement and the rap. Without being able to affirm it absolutely, I think I may say that my co-experimenters were not aware of the slight movements I made with my feet, hand, finger, or breath. In these sittings, otherwise bearing a most suspicious character, there was, therefore, a residue of facts worthy of attentive analysis. I was unable to make this analysis, having shortly afterwards ceased to experiment with the group, which these young men frequented. In some respects I am sorry for it, as the observation of this parcel of truth, and even of the two fraudulent experimenters themselves, was interesting from various points of view.

I will now reconsider the experiments I first touched upon—viz. those conducted in full light—the only ones upon which I establish my opinion. I have indicated as fully as possible the conditions under which I have been able to observe raps. The raps most commonly heard are those given with contact on the table or floor, and then those which are given at some distance from the experimenters.

Sometimes, but more rarely, I have heard them on cloth, on the medium's or sitters' garments, etc. I have heard them on pieces of paper placed on the seance table, on books, on the walls, on tambourines, on small wooden articles, and particularly on a planchette which was used for automatic writing. I have also observed very curious raps with a writing-medium: —when he wrote automatically, raps resounded with extreme rapidity at the end of his pencil. I can affirm that the pencil did not strike the table, for several times I very carefully put my hand on the opposite end of the pencil, and I was then able to verify that the sound was produced at the point of the pencil, the pencil remaining all the time, steadily and firmly, on the paper—the raps resounded on the wood of the table, and not on the paper. In this case, of course, the medium held the pencil in his hand.

Consequently, raps may be given upon various articles, with or without contact, and even at a certain distance from the medium. I have observed some which burst forth as far as nine feet away from the medium. I have not obtained any at a greater distance than nine feet, and it is not often I have been able to observe them at that distance. One of the most curious cases I have observed is the following:—I was experimenting in a room where there was a screen. The table was about nine feet away from this article. Very clear, distinct raps resounded on the floor behind the screen. It was broad daylight, but the raps were given on the shaded side of the screen.

I have frequently heard raps in the seance-cabinet, the medium seated in front of the curtains as indicated in section ii. chapter I. Thus placed, raps are easily obtained behind the medium : they may be given on the floor, the wall, or on the articles placed in the cabinet. They are also frequently given outside the curtains, on the medium's chair, or on the floor under him. When raps are obtained, it is very easy to study them by varying, in many satisfactory ways, the conditions of the experiment. This is one of the phenomena whose reality has been the most clearly demonstrated to me.

The variety of form the raps may take is not less than the diversity of objects upon which they may be given, or the places in which they may be heard. The sound of the usual rap, on a table, reminds you of the tonality of an electric spark, while of course there are many variations.

In the first place, we must note that the tonality of raps differs according to the object upon which they resound. It is easy to recognise by the sound if the raps are given on wood, paper, or cloth. This is an interesting demonstration, because it indicates that the sound is produced by the vibrations of the material substance. The material molecules of the object struck are therefore put into movement; they are not, however, always disturbed in the same way, for the tonality of the raps given on the same object is susceptible of great variety. The raps, instead of being sharp and short, may be dull and resemble the muffled sound of impact with some soft body: they may resemble the slight noises made by a mouse, a fret-saw, or the scratching of a finger-nail on wood or cloth: they may affect the most diverse modalities. Their rhythm is as varied as their tonality.

One of the most curious facts revealed by the observation of raps, is their relation with what I call the personification. Each personified individuality manifests its presence by special raps. In a series of experiments which have now lasted for more than two years, I have had frequent opportunity of studying raps personifying diverse entities. One of these entities called itself 'John,' Eusapia's control, who has retained a friendly feeling for me, it appears, ever since my first experiments with the Neapolitan medium. 'John' manifests by short, sharp raps, so very like the manipulation of the Morse telegraph, that my co-experimenters and I wondered whether we were not actually listening to the usual Morse signals. Unfortunately none of us knew how to recognise letters by rhythm as exercised telegraphists can. A group of four individualities, who call themselves the 'Fairies,' manifest their presence by raps resembling high, clear notes. These personifications are particularly interesting, and, further on, I will have occasion of relating how one of them showed herself to me. The four fairies are fond of mingling in the conversation, approving or disapproving of the ideas expressed by the experimenters. They appear to take considerable interest in the experiments, and I have often noticed that it sufficed—when the raps delayed in making themselves heard—to turn the conversation upon psychical phenomena, their probable explanation, their conditions of realisation, etc., in order to receive approving or disapproving raps at once. Sometimes the raps imitate a burst of laughter—this coincides either with an amusing story related by one of the sitters, or with some mild teasing. Another entity personifies a man for whom I had the deepest affection: these raps are graver in character. This personality seems to have the clairvoyant perspicacity and the kindheartedness of the man I knew. His intervention manifested itself under very curious circumstances, but of too private a nature to be made public. I will cite another personification of more recent appearance. It gives itself out to be the astronomer, Chappe d'Auteroche, and has related most accurately the details of his life and death in California. As a biographical notice concerning this learned man appears in several dictionaries, notably in Larousse, it is impossible to affirm that the irruption of this personification is supernormal. The raps which announce his presence are dull-sounding, and are given with a certain amount of force. In conclusion, light precipitated raps, weak but abundant, are the signals of certain personifications which we might call mar-joys—troublesome guests, whose unwelcome intervention spoils the experience.

Let it not be forgotten, that if I point out the connection existing between the personifications and the raps, it does not follow that I accept the reality of those personifications. I am making a statement, and I fill in all the details, so that experimenters, tempted to resume my observations, may know exactly what I have observed. So far, the personifications have not convinced me of their identity. It is true I act somewhat indifferently the rôle of listener to their fatiguing and rambling conversations, and that I do all I can to bring them back to material phenomena, so much more important to me in that they are so much easier to verify. Were I, however, not to point out the rôle which the raps play in relation to the personification, I would be omitting one of their most significant features, and would not be giving their exact physiognomy.

They manifest themselves, then, as the expression of a will and activity distinct from those of the observers. Such is the *appearance* of the phenomenon. A curious fact is the result—not only do the raps reveal themselves as the productions of intelligent action, they also manifest intelligence in response to any particular rhythm or code which might be demanded.

Often the different raps reply to one another ; and one of the most interesting experiences one can have is to hear these raps clear and resonant, or soft and muffled, sounding simultaneously on the floor, table, furniture, etc.

I have had exceptionally good opportunities of studying very closely this curious phenomenon of raps, and I think I have arrived at some conclusions. The first and most certain is their undoubtedly close connection with the muscular movements of the sitters. I may sum up my observations on this point in the three following propositions :—

1. All muscular movements, however slight, are generally followed by a rap.
2. The intensity of the raps does not strike me as being in proportion with the movement made.
3. The intensity of the raps does not seem to me

to vary proportionately according to their distance from the medium.

The following are the facts upon which I build my conclusions :—

I. I have frequently found that when the raps were feeble or interspersed, an excellent way of producing them was to form a chain of the sitters' hands round the table. One of the sitters, without breaking the chain—which he avoids doing by taking in the same hand his neighbours' right and left hands—makes, with his freed hand, circular sweeps or passes a little distance above the circle formed by the sitters' outstretched hands. Having done this, the experimenter draws his hand towards the centre of the circle to a variable height, and makes a slight, downward movement with his hand; then he abruptly arrests the movement at about five or six inches away from the table, when a rap invariably follows, corresponding with the sudden cessation of the movement. It is exceptional when this process does not give a rap as soon as there is a medium in the circle who is capable, in however feeble a degree, of producing raps.

The same experiment can be made without touching the table, *i.e.* by forming the chain above the table. One of the sitters then experiments as in the preceding case.

This is not the only observation I have made. I have noticed that with mediums of decided power, it was unnecessary to adopt any special method for the production of raps, as they were forthcoming as soon as any sort of movement with hands or feet was executed. With strong mediums, it often suffices to move the hand above the table, to shake the fingers, to gently press the foot upon the ground, in order to determine the production of a rap.

Needless to say with some mediums raps are forthcoming without the execution of any movement whatsoever: with patience nearly all physical mediums can obtain raps without movement. But it seems as though the execution of a movement acted in the nature of a determining cause: the accumulated energy then receives a sort of stimulus, the equilibrium is disturbed by the addition of the excess energy unemployed in the movement, and a kind of explosive discharge of neuric force occurs, causing the phenomenon of raps. This is, however, only a working hypothesis.

The synchronism between the raps and the movements made by the sitters is very interesting, as it reveals the connection which exists between the organism of the experimenters and the phenomena observed. Richet has already pointed this out. Eusapia Paladino, unconsciously perhaps, employs a process analogous to that which I described a little further back. This synchronism may give, as it has given, equivocal phenomena, and may also give rise to many false accusations of fraud. This is perhaps how Dr. Hodgson comes to attribute certain raps produced by Eusapia Paladino at Cambridge, to the latter striking the table with her head. Of course, I am unable to affirm the reality of the raps heard at Cambridge, seeing I was not present at the sitting of the Sidgwick group. I can but say, that the reading of the few extracts of the *procès verbaux* of these seances—most incomplete extracts—does not by any means indicate, whether the movement of the Italian medium's head was the fraudulent physical cause of the rap, or whether this movement was but a synchronous phenomenon.

I cannot help thinking that the Cambridge experimenters were either ill-guided, or ill-favoured, for I have obtained raps with Eusapia Paladino in full light, I have obtained them with many other mediums, and it is a minimum phenomenon which they *could* have, and *ought* to have obtained, had they experimented in a proper manner.

I will discuss these seances more fully further on.[1] Therefore, even in the appreciation of fraud, we must not forget to take into consideration the curious synchronism I am pointing out.

There is another useful observation to make known: namely that raps produced by synchronous movements can be produced by the sitters themselves. In many cases, I have seen experimenters, non-mediums, obtain louder raps than the medium; the presence of a medium, however, is necessary, for, the persons of whom I speak obtain no raps whatever when alone. Here is a subject for study which has not yet been touched upon.

Sometimes, in order to obtain raps, it suffices to touch the medium, or to make a slight movement with the hand above the table, or simply to place the palm of the hand gently on the table; this is an excellent way to obtain clear, decided phenomena. The table must be moved away from the medium in such a way that contact is impossible. The observer puts himself beside the medium, takes both his hands in one of his own, and moves the other slowly over the table, or even keeps it quite still above the table. Nothing is more demonstrative than this experiment. Let us remember I am speaking of experiments made in broad daylight.

II. Secondly, I have verified that the intensity of the raps is not in proportion with the synchronous movement.

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[1] See Appendix B.

I am unable to affirm the accuracy of this statement with the same confidence as with the preceding one; but I have observed the fact in a great many circumstances. Thus, *e.g.* a very slight movement of the finger will sometimes determine a rap, quite as loud as the rap determined by the abrupt lowering of the whole arm.

Again, a simple muscular contraction also will bring about the realisation of the phenomenon, without the execution of any apparent movement.

This observation is of special interest, if I am not mistaken, for it tends to make one suppose that the energy which serves to produce the raps is independent of the movement executed in space, but is connected with the cause of that movement, *i.e.* with the nervous influx. It would be well if experimenters, more competent than I am in physiology, were to study these observations carefully; I sincerely hope this will be done some day. Richet might well undertake these researches, for no one is more competent than he is to analyse the facts I am pointing out.

I think there is a close connection between psychical phenomena and the nervous system. What I have just said about the production of raps by the simple contraction of a muscle under a voluntary nervous influx is one of the reasons upon which I base my hypothesis.

There are others. I have often questioned mediums about their sensations when the raps were being produced. They all acknowledged to a feeling of fatigue—of depletion—after a good seance. This feeling is perceptible even to observers themselves. I have tried to analyse my own sensations when the raps are heard; I have not arrived at any positive result. I cannot say I have any decided physical sensation ; but my negative observation is only of interest, if compared with the different observations I made, in connection with the production of movements without contact.

One of the mediums, with whom some of my best and clearest raps were obtained, tells me he experiences a feeling akin to cramp in the epigastric region when the raps are particularly loud. This medium is a clever and highly-educated man, one quite capable of analysing his own symptoms. It seems to him as though something emanated from his epigastrum.

III. Regarding my third proposition—the intensity of the raps is not appreciably affected by distance—I have found that raps could occur as far as three yards away from the medium. The raps given at this distance were as loud and clear as those given close to the medium. This fact would at first seem to imply a difference between the action of psychic force and that of gravitation, light, heat or electricity, all of which act with an energy in inverse proportion to the square of distances. However, such a conclusion would be premature, for secondary centres of accumulation of energy may be formed at a distance from the medium. The term 'accumulation of energy' is very vague and may be incorrect, but I dare not give a more precise one, and confine myself to simply stating, that the existence of such centres of accumulation and emission seems indicated, by the manner in which the phenomena are obtained.

I have never verified any serious physical effects at a greater distance than that of ten feet. I will add that if the phenomena are not more intense, they are at least more frequent in the immediate neighbourhood of the medium.

Such are the observations I have been able to make. It may quite naturally occur to my readers to think I have been the victim of illusion or fraud. This is not the case, however.

There is no illusion, simply because nothing permits me to suppose I am the victim of illusion. This assertion is insufficient, I admit : we are bad judges of ourselves. And now I ought to say, that if up to the present I have always clearly distinguished between real facts and subjective impressions, I present, nevertheless, two phenomena which may render my testimony suspect. The first is hypnagogic hallucination, the second coloured audition. The latter is not very decided ; sound simply awakens in me the idea of colour, not the visual sensation of colour. My chromo-phonetic scale is *A*, white ; *I*, black ; *É*, grey ; *E*, blue ; *on*, green ; *er*, *air*, *œil*, orange, etc.[1] This phenomenon was rather marked when I was a child ; but, I repeat, the reading of vowels or diphthongs, or the audition of sounds has never awakened a complete sensation of colour ; the idea only was evoked.

On the contrary, hypnagogic illusion is, with me, a decided phenomenon. The illusion is exclusively visual. I have carefully observed this interesting faculty on myself ; it appears to me to have its origin in dream. It is a dream begun before sleep has taken complete possession of one. The hallucination disappears as soon as somnolence ceases. It is with extreme difficulty that I am able to retain—even for a second—a hypnagogic picture, when I regain complete consciousness ; in spite of all my efforts, the picture fades away or changes form as soon as I fix my attention upon it. I have seldom been able to maintain the illusory impression.

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[1] This scale is applicable to the French pronunciation of the vowels in question.

We must not conclude, that I am incompetent to distinguish a real phenomenon from a false one, because of the existence in myself of these two subjective phenomena. I have indicated the results of my self-observation in order to be thoroughly sincere and complete, for I have the keenest desire to be an accurate witness. I do not think, however, that the observations I have been able to make upon myself are really of a nature to cast suspicion upon my faculties of observation. Quite the contrary, I should say; because my personal experience enables me to recognise hypnagogic hallucinations, and, further on, I will point out some phenomena which seem to me to be closely connected with these hallucinations; but as for raps, they have quite a different character, and their objectivity appears quite certain to me.

I will add that every one present can and does hear them. Let me recall to mind what I said about the raps I heard in railway refreshment rooms, restaurants, and other public places. All who were in the same room showed, by their demeanour, that they too heard the raps. This circumstance suffices to exclude the hypothesis of hallucination. I propose registering these raps in a phonograph; this will be the *experimentum crucis* as far as their objectivity is concerned.

I have no manner of doubt whatsoever upon the authenticity of raps, a phenomenon I have heard so frequently, and under such diverse and excellent conditions. I have also taken care to study the different ways of simulating raps,—and these are indeed manifold.

The simplest and most perfect method is to gently glide—an imperceptible movement—the finger-tips along the table. The results are better when the finger is dry, when the natural grease has been previously removed by turpentine or benzine : resin is good, but leaves traces. Under these conditions, slight but clear raps may be obtained. The movement of the finger is so slow, that, unless forewarned, no one can discover it ; but, with attentive observation, a slight vibration of the finger may be perceived when the raps burst forth. They can also be simulated with the finger-nails, but this process is easy to unmask.

The trickster finds greater security in darkness, where he has resources other than those just mentioned. In obscurity he can easily imitate the raps which resound on the floor ; *e.g.* he can produce dull raps by skilfully striking his foot against the legs of the table or on the floor ; he can simulate the sharp, quick raps by allowing his boot to glide slowly along the feet of the table or chair.

Raps are also very easily simulated by a gentle rubbing of clothing or linen, especially shirt-cuffs. We should beware of this, for raps can thus be produced by slow unconscious movements, and the good faith of the experimenters may be involuntarily taken by surprise.

There is yet another way of obtaining fraudulent raps ; this is by leaning more or less heavily on the table. When the top of the table is thin, or when the table is badly put together, or the parts have too much play, the variations of the pressure of the hand determine noises which greatly resemble raps.

Lastly, I have sometimes observed raps produced in a way which should be made known. Some people, by leaning the foot in a certain way, and by contracting the muscles of the leg, can imitate raps on the ground. This fact has been indicated especially in connection with the sinews of the musculus peronaeus longus. I observed a medical student, an incorrigible cheat and neurotic, who obtained sounds very similar to authentic raps by leaning his elbow on the table, and making certain movements with his shoulder. There are also some people who can make their joints crack at will.

But force of habit soon teaches how to ferret out fraud, when working in daylight or with good artificial light. Besides, the tonality of authentic raps is characteristic, and the method of simulation indicated at the beginning of these remarks, *i.e.* finger-gliding, is the only one able to reproduce some of the raps with even a fair amount of exactness.

It does not seem to me to be possible to simulate raps on the table, when they are produced without contact. It is easy to localise them, and auscultation of the table enables us even to perceive the vibrations of the wood. Precautions, easily taken, enable us to make sure of the absence of contact and communication between the experimenters and the table.

To sum up, I am certain—as far as it is reasonably possible to be certain of anything in such a matter—that knockings of variable rhythm and tonality are heard in the presence of certain persons—knockings or 'raps' which cannot be explained by any known process. They are heard at diverse distances ; they often seem to obey the expressed wishes of the sitters, and to manifest a certain independent intelligence. On the other hand, their production appears to be intimately connected with the nerve-energy of the medium and the sitters.

I think I am able to express the foregoing conclusions with certainty and confidence.

CHAPTER III

PARAKINESIS AND TELEKINESIS

I. PARAKINESIS

I APPLY the term parakinesis to the production of those movements where the contact observed is insufficient to account for them. I thus more especially designate the complete levitation of a table upon which the sitters are leaning their hands; also the displacement of heavy pieces of furniture which are but lightly touched by the medium alone, or with other experimenters. Levitation is the raising of an object from the ground without that object resting on, or being in any contact whatsoever with, any normal support.

I have frequently observed this phenomenon with Eusapia Paladino under satisfactory conditions of light and other tests. She has given me several unimpeachable examples of parakinetic levitation, and, I repeat, in full light. A detailed report will be found in the accounts of seances at l'Agnélas, published in 1896 in the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*.

These accounts, however, give only the physiognomy of the regular seances. We sometimes improvised experiments in the afternoon with striking results; and I remember having observed under these conditions a very interesting levitation. It was, I think, at about five o'clock in the afternoon ; at all events it was broad daylight in the drawing-room at l'Agnélas. We were standing around the table ; Eusapia took my hand and held it in her left, resting her hand on the right-hand corner of the table. The table was raised to the level of our foreheads ; that is to say, the top of the table was raised to a height of about five feet from the floor.

Experiences like this are very convincing. It was utterly impossible for Eusapia, given the conditions of the experiment, to have lifted the table by normal means. One has but to consider, that she touched only the corner of the table to realise what a heavy weight she would have had to raise had she done so by muscular effort. Moreover, she had no hold whatsoever of the table. And, given the conditions under which the phenomenon occurred, she could not have had recourse to any of the means suggested by her critics, such as straps or hooks of some kind.

In ordinary seances, the table used to be raised to a lesser height ; perhaps because we were seated, and could not therefore accompany it very far. As a rule, the levitation was preceded by oscillations ; the table raised itself first on one side, then on the other, and finally left the ground. Very often Eusapia, holding her neighbours' hands, would abandon all contact with the table, and make several passes above it, when the table would rise, apparently of its own accord.

I have only obtained parakinetic levitation under really good conditions with Eusapia. I have observed more decided movements without contact with other mediums, but they have not given me levitations properly so-called. I have once or twice obtained defective levitations with a non-professional medium. The table drew near to her of its own accord, and raised itself while touching her dress. This fact occurred in the light, but the conditions under which I observed it were imperfect. I may say the same thing of some levitations I obtained at Bordeaux with rather an interesting professional medium ; these levitations took place in total obscurity, which rendered good conditions of control impossible ; besides no one held the medium's hands and feet, as had been done with Eusapia.

In a series of experiments which gave me some results worthy of careful examination, I obtained the levitation of the table under slightly better conditions. But some of the sitters cheated so barefacedly, that I do not consider I ought to take any serious notice of the parakinetic movements I witnessed there ; although I have the impression that everything was not simulated which happened in this group. The unsatisfactory conditions under which I made this series of experiments led me to discontinue them.

I consider that the levitation of the table, even with the contact of the hands, is a difficult phenomenon to obtain under good conditions of observation. Up to the present, Eusapia Paladino is, I repeat, the only medium with whom I have been able to verify the phenomenon in a satisfactory manner.

Her method is similar to the one I indicated and recommended to my readers. Phenomena is often forthcoming when she raises her hand above the table. Although I do not consider myself authorised to affirm the reality of the effect this method appears to exercise upon the phenomenon of levitation, I indicate it because the positive results, which similar practices have given me in telekinetic experiments, lead me to think it may also answer for parakinetic experiments. Let me briefly explain this method. When the experimenters have their hands on the table, and the latter begins to sway about from side to side as if it were trying to raise itself, one of the sitters puts his hand above the table, palm downwards, and approaches it to within two or three centimetres of the top. Then he raises it very gently; while doing this, the levitation sometimes takes place as though the hand drew the table after it.

I recommend experimenting with as much light as possible. We must not forget that nothing is easier to simulate than a parakinetic levitation. Force of habit will soon teach us how to recognise fraudulent phenomena of this kind, but it is nevertheless important to know beforehand the principal systems of cheating. With the reader's permission I will indicate them.

The position, which the experimenters are obliged to assume around the table when they are seated, has the consequence of almost completely hiding their feet. As soon as the lights are lowered, it is nearly impossible to exercise that mutual control which it is indispensable should be exercised. Now, when the hands rest a little forcibly on the table, it is very easy, especially with a light table, to glide the point of a shoe under one of the legs of the table and to raise it above the ground. This manœuvre is all the easier, as the swaying of the table from side to side permits one to effect the movement, without much fear of detection. Needless to say that hooks attached to the wrist, or specially contrived bracelets, also permit of raising and holding the table in the air. But it is easy to protect oneself against fraud of this nature. Let every one stand up and join hands in the centre of the table; the kind of fraud I indicate will then be impossible. I myself have often obtained fine levitations in this way, but unfortunately in obscurity.

I will point out still another fraudulent process practised at times by professional mediums. It consists in the following manœuvre. The medium places himself at the narrow end of a table,—in preference a rectangular one—he promotes various oscillations, and when he has succeeded in raising the end opposite to him, he spreads out his legs in such a way as to exercise a strong hold over the feet of the table, between which he is sitting. Once this pressure is exercised, there is nothing more for the medium to do, in order to obtain a levitation, than to lean his hands heavily on the table. It is easy to understand how the table, maintained in position by the trickster's knees, executes a rotatory movement around an axis the points of which are fixed by the pressure of the knees; consequently the table, becoming parallel with the ground, appears to be abnormally levitated. This simulation can be successfully realised, even when some one is seated on a chair on top of the table; under the pretence of offering a better condition of control, the medium takes the hands of the person on the table, and finds in him the point of support required to promote the rotation of the table around its axis. We should keep this kind of fraud before the mind's eye when seeking to obtain levitations, especially if operating in obscurity, for then this trick is most easy of execution.

Once again, I cannot too strongly warn experimenters against dark seances: they are absolutely worthless when paranormal phenomena are required. These ought to be obtained in full light; under such conditions the levitation of the table is a verifiable phenomenon.

II. TELEKINESIS

I will now relate my observations upon telekinesis, that is to say, movements without contact. Telekinesis corresponds with *l'extériorisation de la motricité*, discovered by Colonel de Rochas. It is a phenomenon which I have taken particular pains to verify. I have had exceptionally good experiences in this phase of manifestation.

I verified telekinetic phenomena with Eusapia Paladino first of all. When operating with this medium, the seance-table was often elevated without contact. As a rule, Eusapia formed the chain of hands around the table without touching it; at the end of a few seconds, she would make some passes over the table with her right hand, retaining her hold of her right-hand neighbour's hand at the same time: the table would then leave the floor, and remain suspended in the air for several seconds. It fell to the ground heavily as a rule. This experiment was made several times in my presence under satisfactory conditions of light.

It was not only the table which moved with Eusapia: the curtains of the cabinet were often thrown over the table, as if a strong wind had blown them out. This phenomenon was particularly noticeable at l'Agnélas, where we experimented in front of the curtains of one of the drawing-room windows. These curtains were made of heavy silk material, and nothing was more curious than to see them swell out and suddenly stretch over us. The manner in which they were thrown over our heads was peculiar ; it was as though they had been blown out. Without an adapted instrument of some kind, I do not think it was possible for the medium to produce this phenomenon fraudulently with her hand. I obtained the same characteristic movements of curtains with another medium.

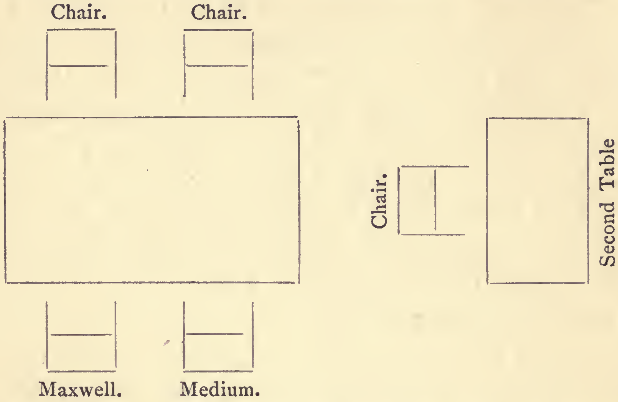
With Eusapia, the sitters' chairs were frequently displaced, shaken, raised, and even carried on to the table. I cannot conceive how Eusapia could have obtained such results normally, considering the strict test conditions exacted at l'Agnélas. We had been courteously acquainted with the results of the Cambridge seances, and our attention had been very specially drawn to the fraudulent practices of this medium. One of us held her feet and her waist, while the mission of two others, seated on either side of her, was to observe her hands. It is relatively easy to know if we hold a right or left hand : it suffices to carefully note the position of the thumb, which ought always to be turned towards the observer if the hand be directed palm upwards, and which ought to be turned towards the medium if the hand be directed palm downwards. It is unnecessary to hold the medium's hand tightly in order to be aware of its position : an ordinary contact, intelligently superintended, is quite enough ; it is of course necessary to make sure of the simultaneous contact of thumb and fingers. Now, in a certain number of cases, the check upon the medium was good, when the chair of one of the sitters was carried on to the table. It is also to be noted, that Eusapia would have been forced to lean forward in a very marked manner, in order to seize her neighbour's chair and carry it on to the table; the inclination of her body would have been easily perceived, especially as the chair was first of all drawn away from under the experimenter and then raised on to the table, manœuvres which occupied some time.

Other phenomena of the same kind were, however, produced in a more conclusive manner. I remember having seen the lid of a trunk, which was placed behind the experimenters and to the left of Eusapia, open and shut of its own accord.

Lastly, I obtained with this medium a very convincing phenomenon, which M. de Gramont had already verified at l'Agnélas after my departure. This is the movement at a distance of the scale of a letter-balance. I made the experiment at Bordeaux in the presence of a few intelligent and educated persons. We operated in a light which was strong enough to enable us to read the faintly marked divisions on the scale. This object had just been purchased by me, and I had drawn it from its wrappings just prior to the experiment. Before our eyes Eusapia repeatedly made the scale go down by raising and lowering her hands, palms downwards. Eusapia's hands were from three to five inches away from the letter-balance; she performed the movements described without abandoning her neighbour's hands. We obtained the lowering of the plate of the balance several times, each time varying the position of the medium's hands, placing them in front of the apparatus in such a manner as to form a triangle of which the plate was the apex, and bringing the medium's hands together so that the angle at the apex became very acute. This was done in order to obviate the possibility of the medium producing the effect by means of a hair or thread between her fingers. I must point out, however, that a hair or thread would have been visible.

By turning her hands round, that is to say by directing them palms upwards, Eusapia raised the plate of the letter-balance to its full extent when it was weighed down by a pocket-book. By measuring the oscillations of the index-needle, we were able to ascertain that the force employed was at least one ounce superior in weight to that of the pocket-book.

The facts I verified with Eusapia, I was able to prove again through other mediums, non-professional. On two occasions, I obtained fine telekinetic phenomena in a public restaurant. I was in the company of a good sensitive, a highly intelligent man, but one who knew little or nothing of spiritism. The first time I was breakfasting with him ; we were seated at a fairly large table, near which was a small round one ; the cloth which was covering our table touched the small one. We first heard several fine raps, and then the small table drew gradually nearer till it touched the big one. There had been a displacement of eleven inches. It was broad daylight, and the conditions under which I observed this fact completely exclude—at least in my opinion—the hypothesis of fraud. Another time we were lunching together. I was seated at the left-hand side of the medium, and we were alone at our table. Two chairs were facing us, while a third one was on the medium's right, facing another table. The chair to the right of the medium approached the table, and then retreated at our request. The chair *facing me* reproduced the same movements. The light was so bright that I was able to observe the hands and feet of the medium with the greatest ease.



These plain, decided, easily observable, and well-observed facts are among the most convincing I have received. The medium's position, the bright light, the full liberty of verification which was permitted me, rendered these observations extremely convincing to me. The measuring of the distances between the table and the object in movement excludes the hypothesis of hallucination on my part. I therefore consider that all possibility of fraud or hallucination was out of the question.

Previous to the movements, I had established contact with the chair in front of me, by means of one of those wooden holders to which newspapers are attached in restaurants and buffets. The chair in approaching us pushed the newspapers towards us, and we were thus enabled to watch the horizontal progression of the chair.

The distance travelled by the chair was from seven to eight inches. The objects moved in a jerky, irregular manner.

I have been able to observe telekinetic table movements on many occasions, and always in broad daylight. Perhaps the most curious movement I have seen is the following: A lady and gentleman once did me the honour of inviting me to witness certain phenomena which they were often able to obtain when experimenting together; these phenomena consisted in slight displacements of a table. They reproduced these movements without contact in my presence. I then begged them to form a chain with me around the table, always without touching it of course. This table, a light tripod, the top of which measured eleven inches by twenty-one inches, was in contact with the dress of my hostess. After having executed several diverse gliding movements—approaching or retreating at request—the table began to raise itself and to strike the floor with one of its feet. We spelt out the alphabet, and received a typtological communication. During this performance, the table was in contact with the dress only. The dress did not hide the feet of the table, the contact was simply lateral, and the table could be seen in entirety. It was daylight, and it would have been easy to detect the slightest movement of the dress. Moreover, the table raised one of its feet which was not in contact with the dress. I did not try—because I did not wish—to remove the contact of the dress, for I had often observed this bulging out of women mediums' dresses: as soon as the garment comes near the table and contact is established, the movement is produced. I have often checked the position of the medium's feet, while the phenomenon was happening, and I have been able to verify that the slight contact was with the dress only, and not with the feet. This curious fact has already been observed by Richet and others, in connection with Eusapia Paladino. I will add that I have often obtained movements without any contact whatsoever, even that of garments.

Another medium has enabled me to verify telekinetic movements of curtains. They were less violent than with Eusapia, but more decided, and enabled me to make some observations which are not altogether lacking in interest. I was once experimenting with the medium in question, in subdued light, contrary to my usual custom. It was in the daytime, but we had closed the shutters of the window and drawn the curtains together, in order to form a kind of cabinet. We were trying to obtain luminous phenomena, which, however, were not forthcoming. The medium had his back turned towards the curtains. I noticed that the curtains stirred now and then. I drew the attention of an experimenter to this, and at first we attributed the movement to a slight draught. We drew the curtains together completely, and then observed that only the curtain close to the medium stirred. It was light enough to see the hands and feet of our medium, and we were able to convince ourselves, that the movements were not normally produced by him. We then noticed that the movements of the curtain corresponded with our movements. The experiment was repeated with success twenty times. We varied the movements and were able to observe, that the maximum disturbance of the curtain occurred, when the medium rubbed the head of one of the experimenters.

The curtain was not blown out over the table as with Eusapia. The movements simply consisted of a species of undulatory trepidation, whose amplitude did not surpass five or six inches: it was like the sinuous undulations of a rope, when shaken at one of its extremities.

Such are the principal facts which I have been able to observe. I will not have much to say concerning the method of operation, for I have already sufficiently indicated how I proceed habitually. I have, nevertheless, two important remarks to make.

The first is, that the presentation of the palm of the hand towards the object, which we wish to displace, often brings about the movement. I proceed in the manner I have indicated for a parakinetic levitation, but instead of presenting the palm of the hand to the top of the table and then drawing it slowly away, I direct it towards the side of the table, and I act as though I wished to attract or repulse the table. I have noticed that this practice gives good results.

The second remark I wish to make is, that when desirous of obtaining movements without contact, it is helpful to form the chain around the table by holding each other's hands. Still, I do not think this precaution is indispensable, for I have obtained telekinetic movements without its aid. It seems to me, however, that it is a method to be recommended, especially in the beginning of the seance.

I have just said that the chain of hands is not indispensable. And, as an example, I remember having once verified some telekinetic movements which interested me very much. I was conversing with a private medium: by the way, all the telekinetic phenomena of which I have been speaking, save those obtained with Eusapia Paladino, have been obtained with private mediums. In the course of our conversation we pronounced the name of a personification, whose irruption in our midst had been as sudden as unexpected. This personification behaves like a cautious and well-advised experimenter, and conducts himself as, I think, I would, if I co-operated on the other side in the experiments I am speaking about. Hardly had I pronounced this personification's name than the table began to glide gently across the floor. We questioned it, and according to our request, it approached or retreated from the medium. The movements of the table alternated with raps. I content myself with merely stating this curious fact, without allowing myself to draw any conclusions therefrom ; it appears to me to offer a striking example of that apparent spontaneity, which psychical phenomena sometimes present.

From the account I have just given of some of my experiments in parakinesis and telekinesis, we may deduct the following propositions : they resume, fairly exactly, the points of fact I have been able to ascertain :—

I. There is a certain correlation between the movements of the medium or assistants and the movements of the objects used in experimentation.

II. Certain peculiar sensations accompany the emission of the force employed.

III. That force has a probable connection with the organism of the assistants.

I. Nothing is easier to verify than the correlation existing between the movements of the medium or sitters, and those of the object with which we are experimenting. I may say, that almost without exception, the movements of the operators are, in a way, reflected by the table. I have already pointed out, that movements of attraction or repulsion attracted or repulsed the table. I have remarked this peculiarity on several occasions. When, in a seance, the presence of a certain force manifesting itself in raps and oscillations without contact is established, it often suffices for one of the sitters to direct his hand towards the table to bring about its immediate displacement. By proceeding in the manner indicated further back, I have noticed that complete levitations could be obtained ; but it is then necessary for the sitters to put their hands on the table, while one of their number puts one of his hands in the centre of the table, and palm downwards slowly raises his hand. Levitations without contact can certainly be obtained by the same method, by simply forming a chain of hands around the table without touching it ; but the results are less difficult to obtain when the hands are laid on the table.

Levitation seems to me more difficult to realise than gliding movements. I have frequently obtained the latter without contact, by directing the palm of my hand towards the table, and trying to draw it after me as though an elastic thread united the table to my hand. Under these conditions the table seems to obey a kind of attraction.

I think I have some observations to make on this subject, but I cannot formulate them with much certitude, and I only point them out in order to provoke—if that be possible—the examination of these facts by persons more competent than I am. First of all, it is not always the medium who obtains the best results in the manœuvre I indicate. I have seen some experimenters obtain more marked movements than the sensitive himself. This is not generally the case, but the fact does not appear to me to be rare. It is rather disconcerting, because those persons, who in a seance manifest a force relatively greater than the medium's, cannot obtain any supernormal fact when alone ; the presence of a medium is necessary for the energy of their action to be manifested. I wonder if this be not due to the medium's inexperience. I never observed this peculiarity in seances with Eusapia, although the sitters could, in her presence, produce certain phenomena themselves. I have only noticed it with the non-professional mediums, who kindly consented to allow me to experiment with them. Nearly all of them had no notion whatever of psychical experimentation ; most of them were altogether ignorant of the practices of spiritism ; and many were frightened by their first phenomena. These mediums have not the tranquillity and presence of mind of myself and friends, whom a long experience has freed from all kinds of bias. Perhaps, therefore, they do not operate under such good conditions as we do, or as more experienced mediums would. Whatever may be the reason, I note the fact observed.

A second interesting observation I have to make is the unequalness of the radiations or emanations which appear to issue from the back or palm of the hand. The action of the palm is decidedly more energetic than that of the back ; as an example, I will recall to mind the experiment with the letter-balance. To lower it, Eusapia lightly moved her hand from top to bottom, palm downwards; to obtain the contrary movement, she turned her hand in the opposite direction. There are certain obscure peculiarities to elucidate in this curious unequalness. It is desirable to study it, for it is one of the rare points where experimentation is really possible, in the studies of the kind I am setting forth. It is to be noted, and this is I think a very important consideration, that the innervation of the palm of the hand is much more abundant than that of the back.

In what concerns movements without contact, I have not noticed any unequalness of action between the two hands: the left hand appears to act quite as well as the right.

In the third place I have verified a correlation, between the intensity of the muscular effort and the abnormal movement. This is an interesting observation, for I have not observed it when studying the phenomenon of raps. As an example, I will cite an experiment which I have often made. When the liberated energy is insufficient to provoke movements, and the existence of a certain quantity of force has, nevertheless, been ascertained, if the manœuvre of attraction does not succeed, we can sometimes provoke the movement by shaking the hand about at a certain distance above the table. This rapid movement of the hand and arm appears to me to develop a maximum of telenergy.

Again, rubbing the feet on the floor, rubbing the hands, the back, the arms, in fact any quick or slightly violent movement appears to liberate this force. These manœuvres often bring about the realisation of the desired phenomenon. It is evident that such manœuvres must be employed with discernment ; some of them might hamper observation : *e.g.* rubbing the feet on the floor if telekinetic movements of the table be desired, for this would render it difficult, if not impossible, to check the position of the medium's feet.

The breath appears to exercise a great influence; things happen as though in blowing on the object, the sitters emitted a quantity of energy, comparable to that which they emit, in quickly moving their limbs. This is a strange peculiarity, one which is apparently very difficult to explain.

A more thorough analysis of the facts permits us to think, that the liberation of the energy employed depends upon the contraction of the muscles and not upon the executed movement. The fact which reveals this peculiarity is easily observed. When the chain round the table is formed, a movement without contact can be procured by tightly squeezing one another's hands, or by resting the feet very firmly on the floor : the former is by far the better process. The limbs have executed an insignificant movement, and we may say that the muscular contraction is about the only physiological phenomenon visible to observers ; it is nevertheless sufficient.

These ascertainments all tend to show that the agent, which is the determining cause of movements without contact, has some connection with our organism and probably with our nervous system.

Other reasons also tend to prove this. Thus it is that the number of experimenters influence the phenomena to a certain degree. The levitation of a table is easier to obtain with five or six persons than with one or two. It is very difficult to arrive at any precise conclusion on this point, for the observations I have read are contradictory. In so far as my personal experience is concerned, I have the impression that, within certain limits, the quantity of force liberated varies in direct proportion with the number of experimenters. Nevertheless, a certain number should not be surpassed if we wish to experiment under good conditions. But I think that the diminution of results may have other causes than the diminution or increase of the number of sitters. I believe that if we could assemble a number of homogeneous elements, we would obtain excellent results. This would explain the so-called miracles, which are said to have occurred in certain primitive congregations, where beliefs were strong and convictions profound. This unity of belief and ideas, and the material and moral regimen, to which every member of the community submitted, determined that harmony which is a fundamental condition for the production of good phenomena. It is in this way that historical and contemporary 'miracles' may be explained. But in the present state of society it is very difficult to unite six or eight persons having identical ideas and submitting themselves to an identical discipline; and I have always thought that the harmony of a circle was more important than the number of its members.

I have just pointed out in detail certain purely physical processes for provoking the production of paranormal phenomena. They give good results when the force is feeble; but as soon as the force is abundant, the simple manifestation of the will is sometimes sufficient to decide the character of the movement; *e.g.* the table will move in the direction asked for by the sitters. Things then happen as though the force was handled by an intelligence distinct from that of the experimenters. I hasten to say, that this seems only an appearance to me, and that I have observed certain similarities between these personifications and secondary personalities of somnambulism. But I would not be giving an exact physiognomy of the facts observed, did I not lay stress upon this curious trait of their character.

In this apparent union between the *indirect* will of the sitters and the phenomena there is a problem, the solution of which escapes me so far completely. I feel that there is nothing of a supernatural order in this union : I also feel, that the spirit hypothesis is altogether inadequate to explain it ; but I am unable to formulate any explanation. This is one of those points of fact which I confine myself to pointing out.

The attentive observation of the relation, existing between the phenomena and the will of the sitters, permits of the demonstration of other facts. Firstly, the bad effect of discord between the sitters. It often happens that one of them expresses a desire to obtain a certain given phenomenon ; if the requested phenomenon be not immediately forthcoming, the same experimenter will demand a different one. Sometimes, several of the sitters ask for several contradictory things at the same time. The confusion which reigns in collectivity is generally manifested in the phenomena, which, in their turn, become vague and confused.

Still, things do not altogether happen as though the phenomena were directed by a will, which was only an echo of the will of the experimenters. The phenomena often manifest great independence, and refuse decidedly to yield to the desires of the experimenters. By admitting even Janet's hypothesis on the secondary personalities of mediums, stretching it from cases of somnambulism to cases of telekinesis, a fact which is very curious from a purely psychological point of view is to be met with occasionally : the secondary personality sometimes manifests itself at the same time as the normal personality, and a conflict between them is the result. I have seen this with Eusapia, when, for example, she wanted to drink, and the table violently opposed itself to her wishes.

To sum up my observations upon the first of my conclusions : There is a close and positive connection between the movements effectuated by the medium or the sitters, and the displacement of articles of experimentation ; there is a relation between these displacements and the muscular contractions of the experimenters ; a probable relation, whose precise nature I am unable to state, exists between the will of the experimenters and paranormal movements.

II. Certain peculiar sensations accompany the emission of the force employed. I hesitated before deciding to formulate this conclusion, because, notwithstanding the great number of observations I have made, I am only able to present this proposition with much reserve. The sensations I am going to describe are purely subjective, and may consequently give rise to all sorts of error and illusion. Some of these sensations may be explained by fatigue or prolonged immobility. In spite of these causes for error, which are, I acknowledge, very numerous and very real, it seems to me, that the impartial analysis of the facts observed tends towards showing that illusion, error, fatigue, and immobility do not explain them all.

I will put aside visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, gustatory sensations; these are, moreover, very rarely observed. I will limit myself to examining certain ill-defined sensations, which appear to depend upon the general sensitiveness, and not upon the sensory organs properly speaking. From the observations I have made, I am inclined to discern five principal sensations:—

- (*a*) The sensation of cool breezes, generally over the hands.
- (*b*) The sensation of a slight tingling in the palm of the hand, and at the tips of the fingers, near the mounts.
- (*c*) The sensation of a sort of current through the body.
- (*d*) The sensation of a spider's web in contact with the hands and face, and other parts of the body—notably the back and loins.
- (*e*) The sensation of fatigue after strong phenomena.

(*a*) The first is very frequently mentioned by experimenters. It is an impression of coolness, or even of cold, which they generally feel over the hands. I have not been able to settle with certitude, if this sensation be purely subjective, or if an element of real objectivity be blended with it. It is at times so marked, that I have some difficulty in believing that it is altogether imaginary. Though it often precedes the production of a motor phenomenon, it more frequently happens, that the sitters feel it without any paranormal fact being forthcoming.

This peculiar sensation is similar to what is felt in seances with Eusapia Paladino, when approaching one's hand to the scar on her head. What she calls the *soffio freddo* is very decidedly felt : it is as though a current of air were escaping through the scar. The reality of this sensation with the Neapolitan medium makes me think, that the cool breeze mentioned in other seances may have some objectivity. It is to be noted, that I have observed this phenomenon with mediums, who had no familiarity whatever with spiritistic seances.

Sometimes, the sensation of coolness or of cold extends to the whole body. Mediums are more likely to feel this than other experimenters. This sensation can bring on veritable shivering, in which case it often coincides with a phenomenon.

(*b*) A tingling sensation may seem to be solely due to immobility, or to other ordinary causes, such as prolonged contact of the fingers with the table. I recognise that this explanation is true nine times out of ten ; but in certain cases it has appeared insufficient to me : either it was felt too soon after the debut of the sitting to be due to fatigue, immobility, or to prolonged contact, or its coincidence with certain well-observed phenomena was too frequent to be fortuitous. Therefore it appears to me probable, that there is some connection between this tingling sensation and the emission of the force utilised.

What is the precise nature of this tingling sensation ? I have carefully questioned those who felt it—and nearly all experimenters feel it sooner or later—and compared their impressions with mine. All the descriptions tally : it is the sensation of a slight pricking, having its seat in the palm of the hand and its maximum intensity on the mounts at the finger-tips. Some persons compare it to the sensation one feels, when lightly touching a mass of pin-points or a stiff brush : others say it seems to them, as though their hands were pierced by small holes, through which something was escaping. The latter sensation is rarer than the former. This tingling sensation has no resemblance whatever with the tingling of a benumbed limb.

The experimenters feel these impressions at the beginning of the sitting ; they do not always indicate a good seance, but I have noticed that if phenomena are going to be received at all, these sensations are generally perceived beforehand, although, as I say, they can also be felt when phenomena are not forthcoming.

(*c*) The sensation of a current passing through the body is less easy to describe. It is of a less precise nature than the preceding one. The majority of persons I have questioned, compare it to the sensation which is produced on them by the passage of an electric current. To me this assimilation has generally appeared approximative. I have sometimes felt this sensation, and can only compare it to a very slight shiver, a kind of feeble vibration, running through the back and arms, especially perceptible to me in my right arm. This sensation, as I feel it, is not continuous ; it takes the form of waves rapidly succeeding each other. It is feeble, and, as a rule, I can only perceive it by paying great attention to it ; in a few rare cases I have felt it very distinctly.

I think that in a great number of cases this sensation is purely subjective, but—as with cool breezes—it does not always seem to be so. It generally accompanies the production of phenomena relatively feeble and continuous, such as raps and gliding movements. I have not always felt it when strong phenomena were forthcoming; but then I was not always in contact with the medium, and often, though I did not feel anything, the medium mentioned having other curious sensations, which I shall speak of presently. Besides, the chain must be formed in order to perceive this sensation of a current with all the accompanying features I have just described; but it is not necessary for the medium to be in the circle. This sensation can also be felt by simply leaning the hands on the table without joining them. This case bears an analogy to the preceding one, if we suppose that the table, serving as a condenser for the emitted energy, suffices in itself to establish a sort of indirect contact with the experimenters. And things seem to happen as though this were really the case.

If that be so, we can at once understand the relation, which appears to exist between the mediate or immediate contact of the observers' hands and the sensation of a 'current.' There is something here which is very obscure and very delicate to analyse, but which, if the fact be real, appears to me to indicate the circulation of some thing or other. It is probable that what circulates is precisely the energy used for the production of the abnormal facts I am relating. True, this is only a hypothesis, and I again beg my readers' pardon for having allowed myself to be drawn into the field of conjecture. I hasten to return to facts.

If the sensation of the 'passage of the current' be feeble, it is not so with its abrupt interruption. When, for some cause or other—a slight discussion between the operators, the medium's emotion, a sudden breaking of the chain—the sensation of the passage of the current is interrupted, the interruption is easily felt. It may even cause a sensation of sudden indisposition, if the interruption coincide with the phenomenon in course of production. This is a curious fact, and one easily observable. The sensation of the breaking of the current is distinctly felt; and it is this which makes me think, that the feeble impression of the passage of the current is not altogether imaginary.

The sensitiveness of different experimenters varies very much. Some are most susceptible to these influences, others are not at all so, or only very slightly. I remember having recently assisted at a seance with one of my friends, a man well known in the fencing world. My friend, although he is still young, had an attack of apoplexy some years ago. He recovered, and has only retained a very slight hemiparesis of the right side. Medically, he comes under the category of hemiplegics. He appears to be extremely sensitive to the impression I call 'the passage of the current.' He compares it to the sensation, which the passage of an electric current produces upon him. He assured me that his right arm was affected by it and benumbed. He told me that he experienced a similar effect when passing near powerful dynamos; he could not, for example, stay long in the gallery of machines at the French Exhibition in 1900, because of the generators of electricity which were installed therein. He had a disagreeable sensation in the right arm; the uneasiness extended from the arm to the neck, and he was obliged to leave the neighbourhood of these electrical machines.

In the course of the seance—a very uninteresting one, by the way—he declared that he felt an identical sensation, and he was even compelled to leave the circle. I relate this observation, for the person who made it is an intelligent man, and quite capable of correctly analysing his own sensations. It is needless to add that he was cool and self-possessed, and observed everything free from bias, one way or another.

The medium's sensations are generally much more accentuated than those of the sitters. Sensitives say, they distinctly feel the passage and the interruption of the current; I think it is a question of degree: their sensations differ from the sensations of other experimenters only in degree. There is, nevertheless, a category of sensations, which is almost exclusively felt by the medium when a fairly strong movement is forthcoming: this is the sensation of a sudden emission of force. One of the most intelligent mediums I have come across describes it, as a sensation of cramp in the epigastric region; it seems to him at times as though he were on the verge of fainting. I have indicated a similar sensation, which I myself once felt during a levitation obtained with Eusapia Paladino. I felt the same thing on other occasions, but not with the same intensity. I remember, for example, an experiment made under the following conditions: We were holding a seance on a winter's evening; the light on this occasion, though feeble, was sufficient. We had covered the table with a woollen cloth which fell over our knees, and protected us slightly from the cold. Upon the seance table we had placed a smaller one upside down. We touched the edge of the smaller table. Having noticed that the small table appeared to be trying to raise itself on one side, I endeavoured to increase the amplitude of the movement by violently contracting the muscles of my arms and legs. While I made this intense effort, we saw the little table slowly lean forward, and turn itself over without coming into any contact whatever with ourselves. When the phenomenon was accomplished, I felt suddenly very tired. It is possible, that the cause of this fatigue was simply the violent effort I had made to contract my muscles; still, I point out this observation—which others of the same order appear to confirm—because the correlation between the effort, and the sudden sensation of fatigue is less regular than the connection between that sensation and the phenomenon. Whatever may be the intensity of the effort, the fatigue is felt with less abruptness and in a lesser degree, when the phenomenon is not realised. I may add, that this sensation only appears to me to accompany telekinetic and certain luminous phenomena. It does not, as a rule, accompany raps or automatic manifestations; the fatigue determined by these phenomena makes itself felt progressively and more tardily. I will return to this however.

(*d*) The experimenters, and particularly the medium, sometimes speak of a sensation, which they compare to that which is felt, by coming into contact with a spider's web. This appears to be rarer than the above-mentioned sensations, and, so far, I have not noticed that it was manifested with certain phenomena rather than with others.

This sensation of spider's web is felt about the hands, the face, and at times the back and loins.

I cannot give any other indication upon this curious sensation.

(*e*) I have already said a few words about the sudden sensation of fatigue, which is felt when an important phenomenon occurs. I have carefully examined the state of the assistants before and after the seances, and I have invariably noticed that most of the experimenters were tired after a successful seance. This fatigue appears to be in fairly exact proportion to the results obtained. I speak of parakinetic and telekinetic results; for it must be noted that the fatigue determined by these abnormal movements is not identical—at least in the case of the medium—with the fatigue which other phenomena appear to occasion.

Movements without contact entail a lassitude, comparable to that ensuing after a long walk or prolonged physical exercise.

III. The last observation leads me to the examination of my third proposition. This is, that the force employed in the production of para or telekinetic phenomena has, probably, a connection with the organism of the experimenters. The analysis I have just made allows one to surmise the very serious reasons, which lead me to formulate this conclusion so precisely. The first of these reasons is the correlation, existing between the movements and muscular contractions of the sitters and the paranormal movements. I have pointed out that this connection appears, in reality, to reside in the muscular contraction rather than in the free movements of the limbs: this is a first ascertainment. There is yet another, that provoked paranormal phenomena are, apparently, approximatively proportional to the movement executed by the experimenter and the effort he makes.

These two first points appear to me to be acquired, and the correlation observed between the muscular effort and the paranormal movement, indicates reciprocal dependence between these two phenomena. We may go further, and try to discover whether the relation indicated resides in the fact, itself, of muscular contraction, or in the physiological fact which provokes it—that is to say, the nervous discharge. Observation tends to show, that it is with the nervous influx that the relation pointed out appears to be made manifest. In support of this opinion I will indicate :—

(*a*) The attraction and repulsion which the palm of the hand exercises to the almost total exclusion of the back of the hand ;

(*b*) The diverse sensations which I have analysed;

(*c*) The influence of the mental condition and dispositions of the experimenters ;

(*d*) Finally, the characteristic fatigue which follows successful seances, fatigue similar to that which is felt after prolonged or violent exercise, that is to say, exercise necessitating a considerable expenditure of nervous force. In a book, in which I am striving to exclude all manner of theory, treating, moreover, of a subject where theoretical hypotheses are premature, I cannot enlarge any further upon these considerations. I must content myself with pointing them out to the attention of those, who may wish to experiment in their turn.

Telekinetic movements are more difficult to simulate than levitations of the table with contact. By operating in daylight, as I have done, and with non-professional mediums, there is every kind of guarantee. Besides, it is very difficult for even a professional medium to trick telekinetic phenomena in full light; he must be a terribly bad observer, who lets himself be taken in under test conditions of light. The slightest link between the medium and the object in movement is easily perceptible, and it is very easy to make sure, that no such link exists. I recommend experimenters to force themselves to direct the phenomena towards movements without contact. I do not advise them even to begin with levitations with contact, for it is a manifestation which is easily simulated; and I advise persons who are not accustomed to seances, and who are not familiar with fraudulent processes, to seek for telekinetic phenomena only. They are longer in coming, and more difficult to obtain; but their demonstration will make it well worth while taking pains to realise them, and spending time to wait for them. When we work in good light, when we can pass our hands in every direction round the article of experimentation, when we operate with articles not belonging to the medium, which have not been in his possession or handled by him, the hypothesis of fraud is inadmissible. I do not speak of the honourability and good faith of the medium: these are important elements of appreciation. But my principle is not to let these considerations have any weight, when judging of a paranormal fact. For, if the observation is to have any serious value, every one ought to be able to verify the conditions, under which that observation is made.

To sum up, the observations, I have so often made with diverse mediums, have thoroughly convinced me of the reality of movements without contact. I believe I have verified a connection between them and the organism of the experimenters. There is a *synergy* between their movements and their muscular contractions and the forthcoming paranormal movements. I have already spoken of this coincidence in the chapter on 'Raps.'

There is this difference, however, to be borne in mind, I have noticed that, within a certain radius, the intensity of the raps is independent of the proximity of the medium. The raps heard at a distance of ten feet appeared to me to be as loud as those which resounded near him or under his hands. I think it is not quite the same with movements without contact. I believe I have noticed, that distance exercises a certain influence over the latter. I have not seen any movements without contact at a greater distance than that of three feet from the medium, save, perhaps, the movements of the curtains of the cabinet. I have observed that the action appeared to reach its maximum at irregular distances. For example, I have obtained glidings of the table by slowly drawing the hand backwards: the movements occurred, when my fingers were about ten or twelve inches away from the table, and not when they were closer to it. Many circumstances may intervene to modify the action of distance, *e.g.* the possible accumulation of force at the end of a given time.

I have often observed, that the intentional direction of a movement executed by an observer influenced the movement of the table. I have not been able to ascertain whether the determination of the direction of the paranormal movement was due to the direction of the movement of the experimenter's hand, or to the manifestation of his will. I have been prevented from solving this problem by the fact, that when the energy is sufficient, the movements will occur in the direction desired by the assistants. The movements seem to be produced by an intelligent being.

I have already pointed out this curious aspect of things, when analysing the phenomenon of raps. Telekinetic movements present themselves to observation in the same manner. They claim, as the raps do, to be the manifestations of personifications. I related an observation I was once able to make under some interesting circumstances; out of seance hours, in broad daylight, in the course of a conversation relative to a certain personification, the table near which we were seated glided of its own accord across the floor, when I pronounced the name taken by the personification. A conversation ensued with the latter, by means of the movements of the table without contact. I also related the typtological conversation without contact which I had with the same personification.

These personages who call themselves the authors of telekinetic phenomena present the same characteristics, as those who claim to be responsible for the phenomenon of raps. I have nothing in particular to say on this point at present.

The observation of the facts resumed in this chapter reveals another circumstance which deserves pointing out. This is the apparent conductibility of certain bodies for the force employed. I gave some examples : table-linen, wood, dresses, etc. I related having often seen women-mediums' dresses bulge out and approach the table, when the phenomenon was being produced; the sensitive's feet remained visible, and, in view of the conditions under which I have been able to test this phenomenon, I consider as absurd the idea that an artificial hand or foot was introduced, as imagined by Dr. Hodgson to explain away this fact with Eusapia. I have frequently obtained movements without the contact of the medium's dress, but I have certainly noticed that this contact facilitates the realisation of the movement.

Darkness favours it also; there is no doubt about this. Of course I am putting aside the greater facilities obscurity offers for the execution of fraudulent phenomena; and though, in this book, I have only taken into account phenomena observed in full light, I have often experimented in obscurity; and it appears to me certain, that total darkness is one of the conditions for the maximum development of the liberated energy.

The action of light is interesting to note. I have already stated that the dynamic agency of psychical phenomena appeared to me to be analogous with the nervous influx, and that the table seemed to play the rôle of condenser. In that hypothesis, light would act like certain rays of cathodic origin, which discharge the electricised condensers placed in their vicinity. The study of the influence of light upon telekinetic phenomena will certainly enable us to learn their cause. The little we already know permits us to suspect that the telenergic force ought to have some *rapport* with light and electricity, at least in that which concerns the amplitude of vibrations.

The study of this *rapport* can only be taken up by an experienced physicist. It will require delicate methods and special instruments, and I earnestly hope it will soon be seriously undertaken.

As for those who confine themselves, as I do, to simply seeking whether the facts be real or not, they should avoid working in obscurity. Light may hamper the production of telekinetic movements, but it will not prevent it. Experimenters should accustom themselves to holding their seances in the daytime, or in a light which is sufficient to permit of reading small print. Above all things, it is necessary to be personally convinced of the reality of the facts; and this conviction is not so easily acquired, when the experiment is made in obscurity.

It is difficult to imagine to what a pitch audacity of certain tricksters will carry them. I once attended a series of experiments, which interested me greatly from that point of view. The group included three young men, one of whom is a most remarkable medium. The other two, intelligent and well-educated young fellows, appeared to me to have some medianic faculties, but I withhold my judgment, because they tried so hard to cheat, that it would not be prudent to seriously notice those facts, where fraud did not strike me as coming into play; for it was always possible. These young men had nothing to gain by cheating; in any case, I have not yet understood what aim they wished to attain. The levitations of the table were splendid—in obscurity—and all the furniture in the seance-room was more or less jostled about and displaced. This was all very fine; it was all very well done; and novices were easily taken in. The 'spirits' caressed or struck the sitters, and I have seen sincere but inexperienced persons convinced of the reality of facts, for which the legerdemain of one of the young men present was alone responsible.

One of these youths, a medical student, presents symptoms of nervous troubles, and will become a hysteric if he is not one already. Notwithstanding my reproaches and exhortations, he could not stop himself from cheating; and I have the impression that fraud is, in his case, almost impulsive. I did not think I was authorised to examine him from a medical point of view, but I observed him carefully. He has manufactured spirit photographs very cleverly; they were wonderfully well done, and only a professional eye would detect the trick. He proceeded by double exposure.

With this group, as soon as the room was lighted up, the phenomena, which were so violent in obscurity, ceased almost entirely. This circumstance alone was suspicious; for the action of light is not such as to constitute an insurmountable obstacle to the production of telekinetic movements. Whenever phenomena are intense in obscurity, we ought to be able to obtain weaker ones of the same kind in light. This is a rule without an exception, as far as my experience goes.

Needless to add that the table, under the normal impetus which the young men gave it, insisted upon total darkness. Now, in truly good seances, on the contrary, I have always seen the table ask for light, if purely motor phenomena were desired. Naturally, it is otherwise with luminous phenomena, of which I am now going to speak.

CHAPTER IV

LUMINOUS PHENOMENA

THE curious glimmering lights, which I am going to describe in this chapter, can only be obtained in total obscurity. They are generally feeble, and appear to be at the limit of visibility.

I will begin by describing a rather curious phenomenon, which is easily observable. I am not quite sure of its objective reality; nevertheless, I will point it out, and give my reasons for doing so.

Certain hand-movements are necessary to bring it into evidence; we must proceed in the following manner:—

1. Face the light.

2. Put a dark object with a mat surface between yourself and the light. Do not place the object so as to screen the light from the operators, simply place it between the experimenters and the light. An arm-chair covered with dark velvet will suit; place it so that its back is turned to the light.

3. Open the hands, put them against the dark background, palms turned towards the chest. Join the hands at the finger-tips; withdraw the hands very slowly, always keeping the fingers stretched out.

4. Place behind you the person with whom the experi-

ment is to be made, his head on a level with the operator's head, that is, in the centre of the plane occupied by the hands.

Under these conditions, when the fingers are drawn apart, seven or eight out of ten persons will see a sort of grey mist uniting the tips of the fingers. The person with whom we are experimenting must not be told what he is expected to see ; the experiment would be vitiated by introducing therein a suggestive or imaginative element.

Three-fourths of those with whom I have experimented perceived a slight mist, passing from the tip of one finger to another or corresponding finger on the other hand. I myself perceive this mist very plainly : to me it resembles cigarette smoke ; it has the same greyish colour, the same appearance, but much more tenuity. The majority of people see it in this way ; but I have met with some, who fancied it a different colour. Those who see the effluvium as coloured are generally gifted with psychic faculties. I have not been able to come to any positive conclusions on this point ; but I have some reasons for believing that the coloured perception of what I call, for want of a better term, 'digital effluvium,' indicates a highly psychical temperament. A young doctor, who has remarkable medianic powers, sees it as red. I also found two persons who saw it as yellow. I have many reasons for thinking that one of these two is a medium ; but he refuses to experiment, and declares *a priori* that psychical phenomena are—to use his own familiar expression—all 'humbug.' The other person is an eminent magistrate. I have found some people to whom the digital effluvium appears as blue. On the whole, from the experiments I have made I reckon that out of 300 people of both sexes, 240 to 250 perceive the effluvium; 2 to 3 out of 100 see it as blue. I have found two who saw it as yellow; and one who saw it as red.

I did not remark that the colour of the effluvium was different from one hand to the other; but in reality I did not question much on the subject, as I was most anxious to avoid anything like suggestion. I have never therefore made inquiries upon the possible difference of coloration in the two hands; but I think it would have been pointed out to me, had it been perceived.

Generally the effluvium appears to unite the tips of the fingers of each hand. But it is not always so. Often two or three digital effluvia converge into one of the fingers of the opposite hand, instead of uniting the corresponding fingers.

I noticed that the meteorological conditions and variations of temperature had a decided influence upon the visibility of the effluvia. When the seance-room is very cold, or when the weather is damp or rainy, the effluvia are scarcely perceptible. They appear to reach a maximum intensity in summer, when the temperature is high, and especially when the air is sultry. When the weather is threatening and stormy, the effluvium is thick and clearly visible to me; when the storm has burst, and the atmosphere has cleared, its intensity diminishes.

It often varies according to the individual. Some people give forth an effluvium, which is more visible than that of others. I have not been able to seize any relation between the appearance of the effluvium and the sex, age, and temperament of the various persons with whom I have experimented; on the contrary, a relation seems to exist between the state of health or fatigue and the emission of this mist; it is rarely visible, when the person who emits it is tired or ill.

Such are the principal remarks, which observation of this curious phenomenon has allowed me to make. I have summed them up carefully, but I ought to say, that to me the reality of this appearance does not seem to be demonstrated. After all it may only be due to an effect of contrast. The conditions under which it is observed with the greatest convenience are those, where the hands stand out clearly on a dark background. In drawing the hands away one from the other, the image of the fingers persists perhaps on the retina, and gives rise, maybe, to an illusion; but this explanation is not always sufficient.

There is an *optima* distance for the realisation of this effluvium. As a rule the effluvium appears denser when the fingers are fairly close together; as they move away the density diminishes; it becomes thinner and more attenuated. But if the hands cease to move, the effluvium disappears. This is the case as long as the tips of the fingers are not more than 2 to 3 centimetres away. If the movement of withdrawal ceases when the finger-tips are within 10 to 15 centimetres proximity, the effluvium remains visible for a longer time. This is what generally happens, but the facts have not always the same regularity. There is, in psychical phenomena, the same diversity and variability, which are observed in other biological phenomena.

I have said that the effluvium persists longer and is best seen when the finger-tips of each hand are within 10 centimetres proximity. Under these conditions, the movement of separation being suspended, the slight mist, which I described, persists several seconds. Sometimes the effluvium is clearly visible, when the fingers are 25 to 30 centimetres apart.

I am inclined to think, that this effluvium is not altogether an imaginary phenomenon. It seems to me to exclude, at least, the hypothesis of the persistence of the retinal image ; for the false image does not last so long as the effluvium, under the conditions mentioned by me.

There is yet another explanation. This is that the eye automatically prolongs the clear impression of the fingers on the dark background separating them. This would be analogous to the expansion by irradiation of clear images upon a dark background.

Other reasons, however, make me discard this hypothesis. In the first place, why do some people see the supposed false image vividly coloured and not white? Secondly, if the phenomenon is of retinal origin, why—instead of being thinner, as is the case—does not the image reproduce the form of the finger ? Why is it a blue-grey colour and not black, as should be the complimentary image of a finger which appears to be white?

Why is not the phenomenon produced with certain objects coloured in white? In vain might we experiment with them as with the hands ; they would never leave effluvium between them. There is an exception, however : if we hold cotton or wood in the hands, we will often perceive this appearance of effluvium. It is not obtained, as far as I have been able to judge, with metal objects. From this, it may be inferred, though I do not affirm it, as my experiments are not sufficiently conclusive—that wood and cotton conduct the effluvium as well as flesh. This seems to me very probable with cotton ; by holding a crumpled handkerchief in the hand, and presenting it to the background as I have recommended doing with the fingers, we will notice a slight mist round the cotton, which seems to soften off the outlines.

Finally, another more serious reason for considering these effluvia as probably objective, is the frequent absence of parallelism between the effluvia of corresponding fingers. I have often observed distinct divergencies, and it sometimes struck me as though the will might be able to influence the direction of the effluvia to a certain extent. It often happens that all the experimenters see the effluvia under the same aspect. The phenomenon can show great variability in appearance, the middle finger of one hand, for example, becoming connected with two, three, or four fingers of the opposite one.

As the aspect of this effluvium usually appears the same to the observers, there is room to presume that its existence and direction are not illusory phenomena. In the contrary case, we would have to suppose collective hallucination, or a most improbable transmission of impression, which my personal observations do not dispose me to admit.

The phenomenon, which I have called 'visibility of the digital effluvium' for the sake of convenience, is very easy to observe. I make great reserves on its objectivity, although I think its reality is more probable than its non-existence. It is most desirable that competent experimenters should verify these observations, which I only present as uncertain.

I would have no doubt whatever of the phenomenon, if the accounts of the persons with whom I experimented had always concorded as to the direction taken by the effluvia ; but it was not so. Though there is a good proportion of corroboration, I have often observed contradictions in the descriptions which were given me.

Although the digital effluvium does not yet appear to me to be demonstrated, I think it will be interesting to point out the analogies it presents with phenomena already mentioned by diverse experimenters, notably by Reichenbach and de Rochas. These two experimenters operated under very different conditions to mine. The one placed his sensitive in profound obscurity and left him there for a time ; then he made him look at living beings, flowers, magnets, ends of cords, and metal wires, opposite ends of which were in the sun ; his sensitives generally saw—especially with human hands, crystals, and magnetic poles—a kind of flame or luminous mist surrounding them, or issuing from them. Rochas has chiefly experimented with sensitives plunged in deep sleep ; every one has read of his experiments,—the blue and red coloration which his sensitives gave to the gleams of light which are emitted by magnetic poles, and the right and left sides of the body. My conditions of experimentation were very different from those under which Reichenbach and Rochas worked. I took the first comer and operated in broad daylight. But my observations tend to confirm theirs, at least in what concerns the radiation of something at the finger-tips.

Another interesting observation remains to be made.

I have shown that very probably linen, and perhaps wood also, were easily impregnated with that substance of which the effluvium is constituted. This fact may be compared with those I pointed out, when dealing with telekinetic movements: particularly the approach of a small table which touched the cloth of the table at which I was breakfasting; the approach of the chair which was touched by a wooden newspaper-holder lying on the table; and lastly, the curious bulging out of mediums' dresses, which grazed the feet of the table in some cases of telekinesis. Without forming any premature hypothesis, it is allowable to look upon the digital effluvium as having some connection with the force, which is the determining cause of movements without contact.

The effluvium is visible under other conditions, which are worth noting. It can be seen, when passes are made over a person or an object. The appearance is again similar to smoke; it is a bluish-grey mist, which seems to form prolongations of the fingers.

The effluvium is not a luminous phenomenon. I have described it in order to be complete, and not to omit a fact which is interesting for more than one reason. It can, moreover, be seen by certain subjects in the dark. Here is an interesting experiment, which I have sometimes realised, but which presents certain difficulties.

One of the mediums, with whom I experimented, appeared to have an exceptional acuteness of vision in reference to the effluvium. He saw it escape from the hands of the sitters, and spread itself over the seance-table. Desirous of finding out what the medium would see in total darkness, I put out all the lights, and invited the medium to touch my hand if he saw it. The experiment did not succeed every time, but the proportion of success was superior to probabilities ; but as the medium might have been able to guide himself by the sense of hearing, I thought of testing him by touching the table. The sensitive quickly recognised the finger-tips, claiming to perceive a kind of milky phosphorescence at the spot where my finger was. To make doubly sure I tested him still further by tracing letters on the table with the tip of my forefinger, taking the precaution to avoid all sound. The medium read nearly all the letters drawn. I then traced some words ; he read them off also. I was able to make him read words of five letters ; he was not able to read longer words, he recognised the last letters, but declared that the first were blotted out. Nearly all the words of three or four letters were read correctly, and the errors were often significant : *e.g.* the word 'foi' became 'loi.' Now, in a running hand-writing, it suffices to suppress the lower part of the 'f' for the letter thus amputated to take the aspect of an 'l.' I cannot say if the sensitive really saw what he claimed to see, or if he were guided by the sound of my finger. I am obliged to trust to his sincerity on this point ; but I have reason to believe that this medium is sincere and honourable. He is a man of education, and is not a professional medium ; he follows a liberal profession, and does not wish his name to be mentioned. I have much esteem for him. On the other hand, his senses would need to have been extraordinarily developed, to have enabled him to recognise the movement of my finger from the very slight sound it may have made. No sound was perceptible to myself. I wrote on a small varnished table of blackwood, on which my finger glided easily and silently. Again, the errors made now and then—by reading ‘ loi ’ for ‘ foi,’ etc., seem to prove that the sense of sight and not sound was in operation.

Sometimes it happens, that it is no longer the effluvium which is perceived, but the whole hand itself becomes phosphorescent. Rays come and go like gleams on the back of the hands, or on the fingers, and sometimes, but very rarely, on the face or body of the sitters. These phosphorescences and the digital effluvia appear to me to belong to the same order of phenomena. Frequently, they are but fleeting gleams seen at the finger-tips, when the hands are resting on the table. Though I and others who have experimented with me, have often verified this appearance, I have some doubts upon its reality. In obscurity, the eye tires quickly, and phosphenes soon appear; still, I have nearly always observed, that these glimmering lights were perceived by other persons in the same spot I saw them in.

I have rarely observed those glimmering lights, some people see, on the garments and faces of sitters.

I have not yet been able to verify, in a positive manner, the phosphorescence of the hands in ordinary seances; though observers in whom I have the greatest confidence, have assured me that they had remarked it. We must not lose sight of the fact that the eyes tire quickly; when the obscurity is not complete, the white hands are vaguely perceived on the dark background, the eyes, growing tired, accentuate the contrast between the two shades, and the palest has a tendency to appear slightly luminous.

Sometimes, but very seldom, I have observed sparks which seemed to coincide with raps. This phenomena appears to have an objective reality. I was not the only one to notice these sparks; others saw them also; their apparition at the moment the raps were heard was constant. These circumstances permitted us to think, that the phenomenon ought to have an objective substratum of some kind.

However, I have observed luminous phenomena which were decidedly objective. At Choisy, we obtained them under special conditions, which Rochas has indicated, and which are rather significative. These lights, which were very brilliant, looked like large phosphorescent drops gliding about on Eusapia's bodice, after having floated for some time in the air. This phenomenon did not appear to me to be very convincing, because during the sitting, a strong odour of phosphorus permeated the room. When Eusapia had left, I returned to the room, where I found MM. de Gramont and de Watteville, who were as inquisitive as I was. We searched but found nothing on the floor.

Our suspicions had been aroused by the phosphorescent odour, which was diffused in the room. Since then, I have noticed it in seances, where fraud seemed to be impossible. This odour is characteristic; it is more like the odour of ozone than that of phosphorus. It is like the odour perceptible in the vicinity of static electrical machines when in activity.

These flitting lights can be easily imitated. A prudent experimenter ought never to lose sight of the fact, that it is possible to employ diverse substances in order to produce phosphorescent effects. The use of phosphorescent oil, for example, will give fictitious luminous phenomena. I remember a seance at which the medical student, of whom I have already spoken, was present. I noticed that one of his finger-tips shone for a moment. I afterwards learnt, that this young man had a phial of phosphorescent oil in one of his pockets. On another occasion, long narrow lights were, from time to time, seen on his body. I think these were produced by matches or straws dipped in the luminous liquid. Phosphorescent preparations, as a rule, have the advantage of only becoming very luminous, when they are shaken about in the air ; for the lights, which are given forth by the phosphorus they contain, are only produced when there are phenomena of oxydation.

Objects coated over with sulphide of calcium, strontium, or baryum, become luminous in obscurity, when they have been previously exposed to light. This is the principle of luminous dials, match-boxes and candlesticks. There are also other substances which permit of simulating luminous phenomena.

I was once present at some seances, which were very curious from the point of view of the luminous phenomena which I observed. These seances were of the series of which I have already spoken. The two young tricksters, some of whose misdeeds I have related, were present, and as one of them is an excellent chemist, it is possible that the superb phenomena I observed were not altogether authentic. I confess, I do not see how fraud was committed ; but, given the conditions under which I experimented, I think I ought to abstain from expressing a favourable opinion upon the reality of the facts observed. I will describe them succinctly, indicating the phenomena which could have been simulated, and those which did not appear to be so.

The medium is a young man of twenty-four years of age, of good family, and fairly well-educated. He has been well brought up, and his manners are good. He is a commercial clerk. He is a tall, strong, well-built young man, apparently in robust health. He is intelligent, but does not strike me as having a very strong will. He is easily influenced by his comrades, and was particularly so by the medical student whose irrepressible tendency to cheating I have already spoken about. The student had a great ascendency over the medium, and, in spite of my advice, induced him to experiment too frequently, almost daily. It was easy to foresee the result: the imprudent student and medium both presented visible nervous troubles at the end of a few weeks. The seances were held in the evening with a round table which had a double top; they began in the light, but, in obedience to the behests of the table, total obscurity was speedily obtained. I have always thought that obscurity was asked for by one of the two tricksters, who was then able to give himself up to his heart's delight, and do as he pleased with his confiding group. They had invited some of their friends—students or doctors—and I was extremely sorry for these new-comers, in that they should have been present at such suspicious seances.

To be quite exact, I ought to say that, though I was convinced these young men frauded, I was not always able to bring it home to them. I generally seated myself beside the most turbulent of the two young men, and the hand which I held never once left mine. But the other hand and the other trickster had more liberty, and some of my co-experimenters verified fraud.

Moreover, I suspected fraud, because of the appearance of the phenomena, which were of an extremely rough character. The table, raised from the floor, was at times thrown against the observers with so much force, that they have occasionally been seriously hurt. This never happens with true phenomena. The thin top of the table was broken; a 'phenomenon' which was caused by exaggerated pressure or violent blows destined to imitate loud raps. Real raps never break a table; its feet are sometimes demolished, when the levitated table falls abruptly, but this is the only damage I have ever observed at serious seances.

Notwithstanding the more than suspicious conditions under which we operated, I am not sure that all the phenomena were simulated. In these seances, there seems to have been a mixture of much that was false with a little that was true. A longer observation would have permitted me to come to a more definite conclusion, but the seances were discontinued.

Of the phenomena, the authenticity of which appeared probable to me, I will mention raps. Many of them were obtained in the light and without apparent contact; they had all the aspect of the authentic raps I have so frequently observed. But owing to insufficient control, I do not feel able to affirm their reality.

As for luminous phenomena, I cannot help wondering how some of them could have been simulated. In order to give a precise physiognomy of the conditions under which they were observed, I will briefly relate one of the most curious seances of the series.

There were about a dozen persons present. Five or six sat down to the table, and raps were obtained, now on the table, now on the floor. Obscurity was asked for and gradually given. The phenomena increased in intensity as the darkness deepened. When we could no longer see, the usual levitations, violent knocking, and displacement of furniture had their own way. The seance was discontinued for a few minutes, and resumed towards eleven o'clock. The table requested that the medium might be placed in the cabinet, which was in a corner of the room, and made of white curtains. The medium was placed as requested. The table then asked the experimenters to withdraw from the vicinity of the cabinet; when giving these directions, the table appeared to strike the floor of its own accord. It told us to seat ourselves at a distance of 6 feet from the cabinet, and then asked us to sing. We droned out the air, 'Frère Jacques, dormez-vous?' At the end of ten or fifteen minutes, milky-looking phosphorescent lights were seen on the curtains of the cabinet; then luminous hands appeared. One very luminous hand rose rapidly outside the curtains and seized a bell, which had been hooked on to a nail at about 7 feet 6 inches above the floor. This hand was visible to every one.

Then the milky-lights were again seen, larger and more brilliant than before. One of these lights, the outlines of which were very indistinct, floated about the room, and withdrew to about 9 feet from the cabinet, along the wall opposite the one near which the experimenters were grouped. This light appeared to be 4 feet above the ground; it was about 3 feet high by 10 inches broad, and appeared to float in the air. It remained visible for several seconds.

Afterwards, other lights were seen near the curtains; finally, one extremely brilliant light appeared above the curtains near the ceiling. This light was about 1 foot 6 inches high by 1 foot 2 inches wide. The outlines of this luminosity were more clearly defined than those of the light which floated about the room.

These phenomena were clearly visible to every one. Some of the experimenters thought they could see shadowy forms in these lights. As for me, I could distinguish no human appearance therein. The first light I described gave me the impression of a luminous pillar ; the second, whose outlines were better defined, awakened no idea of any definite form. We ceased experimenting shortly after this seance.

Were they genuine, these phenomena ? I am not sure, but I cannot help wondering how they could have been simulated ! There are some distinctions to be made between these appearances, of which I have only described the principal. The luminous hand, which unhooked the bell, was well defined : it was very distinct and one mass of light. I quite understand that suspicion might fall on the medium ; he might have covered his own hand with some phosphorescent substance, and, thanks to his height, unhooked the bell himself. Let us try to find out what substance he could have used. We must, I think, put aside the idea of phosphorescent oil. This would have left traces on the medium's hands and clothes, on the curtains of the cabinet, on the bell, on the wall where the bell was hung. Now there was nothing of the sort. The medium's hands and garments bore no trace whatsoever of oil. Besides, the light which is given forth by preparations which have phosphorus as their basis, has neither the duration, nor the uniformity of the lights I observed.

Is it a preparation with a basis of sulphides of the calcium class? Sulphides, in order to be phosphorescent, ought to be in a dry state. They are usually reduced to a powder, and this powder is pasted on to the substance we wish to render luminous. The appearance of a hand might be given by a glove done over with sulphide of strontium or calcium. But I need not say how difficult it would be to put on this glove. True, the glove could be stuffed with horsehair, dipped in paste and sprinkled over with sulphide in the desired position. The phenomenon which I observed, could then be explained in the following manner: The medium might have moved the luminous glove about with one hand, and unhooked the bell with the other. This is possible, and yet it does not appear to me to explain what I saw.

In any case, this explanation ceases to be satisfactory, when we consider the case of the floating lights. I know of no system which allows of imitating the immaterial, fugitive, diaphanous appearance of these curious lights. My chemical knowledge, it is true, is very rudimentary; and one of the young men I speak of is a clever chemist; it may be he knows of a more perfect process than those just mentioned. Nevertheless, it seems to me that a piece of cloth done over with some luminous preparation or other, would not have the aspect of the light which I saw floating about the room. I think it is very difficult to reproduce these vague, ill-defined lights, which are more like a luminous cloud than a phosphorescent material object.

The outlines of the last appearance I described were well defined, and in its upper part reminded one of the folds of material. Some of my co-experimenters thought they recognised a masculine, bearded head therein, covered with a turban or burnoose. If we had been in the presence of an artificial phenomenon, the luminous object should have presented the same aspect to every observer. It was not so in reality; for some of us could distinguish no recognisable form in the luminosity. I know that the imagination can be the cause of much visual illusion. It makes us complete imperfect images, and see faces and forms in plays of light and shade which only faintly recall these forms and faces. I have not observed the curious phenomena which I describe, under conditions sufficiently precise to enable me to affirm their objectivity, and I can only repeat what I said just now, that their reality appeared probable to me, in spite of the frauds of which I knew, and those which I suspected; in spite of my intellect's prejudice, I was favourably impressed.

I will add that the luminosity, which floated about the room, moved about up and down, and lasted for several seconds. That part of the room where it floated about was blocked up with the table, chairs and other furniture, which had been taken there from the recess adjoining the seance-room. All the experimenters were grouped together in one part of the room. None of them left their seats during the production of these phenomena. Had the medium left the cabinet and manœuvred the light we perceived, he would have knocked against the scattered furniture. We kept the strictest silence, when luminous phenomena were being produced, and we would certainly have heard the medium moving about, had he left the cabinet. Now, we heard no noise whatsoever; neither of the footsteps he would have been obliged to make, nor of the furniture which he would have knocked against, unless he be able to see remarkably well in the dark.

Such are the observations I have to present upon this curious seance. One of my friends, an eminent savant, well acquainted with this kind of phenomena, had, like myself, the impression that those I have depicted were real.

Moreover, in other seances this medium gave us similar luminosities. I will even point out that one of the suspected sitters — the medical student — the clever chemist—having been eliminated, and the experiments taking place at the house of one of my medical friends, we observed globular lights on the curtains of the cabinet behind which the medium was sitting. These lights were much smaller than those I have just described —they were as large as a walnut—but were easily observable.

I hope to be able to resume my experiments with this medium; for to me he seems to be one of the most powerful I have ever seen. It is really a pity he should have fallen into the hands of imprudent and ignorant young men; they have abused his force, worn him out, and made him ill. Judiciously handled, he might have become extraordinary. It remains to be seen, if the bad conditions under which he has been developed have not had the effect of destroying the rare faculty he possessed. I will return to these considerations later on.

The lights produced by this young man were the most brilliant I have ever seen. Their colour has been well compared to the light of the nebula by one of my co-experimenters, a distinguished amateur astronomer. This experimenter had a good spectroscope, but he has never been able to succeed in analysing, spectroscopically, the lights we have seen. They were too unsteady and fugitive.

I now come to some visual phenomena, which have not the same luminous feature as those I have been speaking about, but which present another very curious feature: they give representations of objects or of human forms.

I have not seen any phosphorescent human forms such as certain observers affirm to have seen. I have said that the Bordeaux medium, in presence of whom I had seen such fine luminous phenomena, had also given us a luminous hand. At Choisy in 1896, I saw the same thing with Eusapia. There was enough light in the room to see Eusapia's hands. Under these conditions—the hands of the medium being not only held by her right- and left-hand neighbours, but visible all the time on the table—we perceived at about 1 foot 9 inches above Eusapia's head a slightly phosphorescent hand, which shook about in the opening between the two curtains. This appearance was very distinct, and was perceived by all those whose positions allowed them to see it.

This was not the first time I had seen the form of a hand. In 1895, at l'Agnélas, I saw a hand and bare forearm, which showed itself in profile above M. Sabatier, seated in front of me, and touched him on the forehead. At the same moment, M. Sabatier mentioned having been touched on the head. My perception was clear and decided; I was positive of having seen this hand and forearm. I remember that my co-experimenters—two of them at least—hesitated to admit my observation, because I had been the only one to see it. In 1895, I was not so accustomed to seances as I became later on, and I was inclined to listen with deference to my friends' remarks, but I was so positive of the reality of my observation, that it was inserted in the report. Subsequent experience has multiplied observations of this order: they recall to mind the round head seen at Carqueiranne. The hand and forearm which I saw at l'Agnélas were black and opaque. They were projected on to the clear background of the room where we experimented; we were seated in such a way that only I could see them.

I did not see anything quite like this in 1896; for, it will be remembered that the hand we saw at Choisy was slightly phosphorescent, and presented quite a different appearance to the dark, solid-looking arm and hand which I saw at l'Agnélas. I remember one day at Choisy, when M. de Gramont was in the cabinet behind Eusapia, the latter told us to blow hard. At the same moment, M. de Gramont saw the shape of a pair of bellows.

At Bordeaux, in 1897, we again saw black, opaque forms under excellent conditions. A few extracts from the reports of these seances will be found in the Appendix. I refer my readers to this for the detail of the material conditions under which we operated. I will simply indicate here that the room, in which we held our seances, is lighted up by a very large bay-window. The persian shutters were closed for the seances; but the gas-light, from the kitchen premises, was reflected through the persians on to the window-panes, and cast a faint light in the seance-room. In consequence of this reflection on the panes, the window formed a kind of clear background, upon which the silhouettes of certain black forms could be seen by at least half of the experimenters.

We all saw these forms, or rather the form ; for it was always the same form which was shown, the profile of a long bearded face with a strongly arched nose. This appearance is said to be the head of 'John,' Eusapia's habitual personification. It is an extraordinary phenomenon ; and the first idea which presents itself to the mind is that of a collective hallucination. But then it remains to be asked, why it was manifested under the very special conditions I have indicated. Moreover, the care with which we observed this curious phenomenon, and—it seems to me superfluous to add—the calm with which we experimented, render the hypothesis of hallucination a most unlikely one.

The hypothesis of fraud is still less admissible. The head we perceived was of natural size, and measured about 1 foot 6 inches from the forehead to the extremity of the beard. If the phenomenon is to be attributed to fraud, we must explain how Eusapia hid the necessary mask on her person ; we must also explain how she could have drawn it out unknown to us, and further, how she manœuvred it. Eusapia did not go into trance at our Bordeaux seances. She sometimes saw the profile in question, and manifested her satisfaction at being able to look on, for the first time I think, at the phenomena which was produced through her. The light from the window was sufficient to enable us to see Eusapia's hands. I have no need to say that her hands were carefully held by her right and left controllers. If this profile had been concealed on her person, it would have been absolutely impossible for her to manœuvre it. The profile we observed appeared to form itself at the top of the cabinet, at a height of about 3 feet 9 inches *above* Eusapia's head; it descended slowly and placed itself just above and in front of her; at the end of a few seconds it disappeared only to reappear later on under the same conditions. We always carefully assured ourselves of the relative immobility of the medium's hands and arms; and the strange phenomenon I relate is one of the most irreproachable I have ever verified, so utterly incompatible is the hypothesis of fraud with the conditions under which we observed it.

Two or three times a slightly luminous phenomenon was noticed. It was formed on the curtain, near which my friend M. de Pontaud and I were sitting; it was a whitish, milky-looking spot, visible to every one, at least to those whose positions allowed them to perceive it conveniently. This luminosity appeared to shrink up quickly, and disappeared on a level with our heads.

Evidently I have no explanation to offer. The apparition of these human forms raises a problem, which is far more complicated than the problem of raps and movements without contact, and I think the study of this problem cannot be profitably undertaken at present. Nothing authorises me to consider these curious phenomena as demonstrating the exactness of the spirit hypothesis; I think their cause lies elsewhere than in the intervention of the spirit of a deceased person; but I am not yet able to formulate any rational opinion on this subject. However, I will point out the close connection, which appears to me to exist between the production of these forms, and the production of raps and movements without contact.

These relations tend to persuade me, that all these phenomena belong to the same order, and depend upon the same agent, and the same cause. Before, however, analysing summarily the observations on which I base this opinion, I ought to describe a series of experiments, which have given me most curious results. These experiments were made with a medium, a man of deep intelligence and refined nature, of whose medianity I have already spoken, pages 74, 79, 81-2, 101-3. I obtained with him: (*a*) raps, faint at first, but very clear and well verified, with and without contact; (*b*) movements without contact of feeble amplitude, but very well observed; (*c*) faint luminous phenomena; (*d*) finally, the production of diverse forms. The first two categories of facts have already been dealt with, I will now describe the last two. They confirm, to a certain extent, the experiments already related in this chapter.

The first time luminous phenomena were seen, we were holding a seance in a small room, but were not using a table. The medium perceived several lights and even faces on the wall in front of him. These lights and faces were not visible to me. Sometimes I thought I saw lights, but extremely faint ones, and at the limit of visibility; I think these lights were subjective. And yet, I have often asked the medium where he saw the light, to describe its shape, and the direction it took if it moved about, and I have remarked that the indications given by the medium concorded with my own observations; but, curiously enough—and it is my duty as a witness to point this out—I could often see these lights, just as well when my eyes were closed, as when they were open. This circumstance seems to me con-

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clusive, and makes me think these lights were subjective. In reality, I do not think that the light emitted by the gleams I saw was of such a nature, that its rays could penetrate through closed eyelids. This interior visibility should exist in every case ; now this is not so, and I have only observed it with this particular medium, though I had once or twice suspected it in a former series of experiments.

On the other hand, I cannot consider these visions as hallucinations, unless I also admit that this entoptic hallucination is collective. But then, why are not these illusions met with in other seances? Why is the manifestation of lights or forms accompanied by abundant raps without contact? These raps immediately precede the apparition of the forms, and behave as though they were signals destined to draw the attention of the observers. This is a coincidence which is not fortuitous, for it is almost constant.

The first time that a more or less definite form was observed with this medium, no seance was being held. The medium saw on the wall the apparition of one of his 'personifications,' and the word *curtain* traced in luminous letters. The sensitive could not interpret the meaning of this word, for he had never been present at any spiritistic seance. I told him to continue observing, for I thought I understood the meaning of this message. I immediately arranged, as well as I could, a kind of cabinet in a corner of the room with the help of some black curtains. We darkened the room and sat down before a table, the medium having his back turned to the cabinet. In a short time we heard raps on the table, the medium's chair, the floor, and on the wall inside the cabinet. The medium, interested, turned half round towards the cabinet, when all at once, after the production of some very faint, flitting lights, I perceived the beautiful face of a woman, pale, the eyes up-raised as though in prayer. The eyes and hair were black; the hair was parted in the centre and dressed in the style of fifty or sixty years ago. The face was draped in a white veil which also covered the head, forming a kind of frame for the face. The physiognomy was of the sweetest, and of rare beauty. The apparition appeared to be slightly luminous, of a whitish, milky hue. It showed itself to the left of the medium, but high above him, near the ceiling. It remained visible for a very short time. Prudently interrogated, the medium gave me the exact description of the face I had just perceived. The details concorded in every way. Inquiry as to who it was elicited the information, given in raps, that it was the face of one of the group of four fairies of whom I spoke on page 81.

It is not often I have had such a clear vision. I have, indeed, very rarely obtained this curious phenomenon: still, I have observed it distinctly three times with this medium. The second time, the faces seemed to be only partially materialised; I only saw portions of faces unknown to me: the medium recognised one of these faces. The third time, the medium saw the apparitions plainly, and described them, but I saw only faint lights; suddenly, however, I saw a face, the forehead, eyes, and nose, reproducing the traits of a very dear friend I had recently lost. The medium saw the whole face. He did not know my friend when he was alive, but he has had curious and strange posthumous apparitions of him under conditions which it would be interesting to relate, but, unfortunately, I am not authorised to do so completely.

It is not only the forms of human beings which I have seen with this medium, but also those of animals, more or less strange. I cannot help thinking that these are due to imagination. But the curious fact is, that there is concordance between the medium's visions and the appearances perceived by the sitters.

Finally, under the same conditions, I once saw a copper lantern, of well-defined shape, and in a particular position. This vision was also seen by the medium in the same way. Here, again, I cannot form any satisfactory explanation. I am inclined to think, that I am the victim of hallucination, though the circumstances do not favour that hypothesis. The vision of the lantern is analogous to that of the pair of bellows seen by M. de Gramont with Eusapia. I refer my readers to what I said further back concerning the concordance between the raps and the apparitions; this simultaneousness existed with the apparitions of animal-like forms and material objects, as well as with those of human faces. This is a fact which is of a nature to set aside the hypothesis of pure illusion. But then!

I have mentioned these strange experiences in order to be complete and sincere. I do not conceal the fact, that it costs me much to relate this, because I do not find herein the conditions of precision, which my experiments in telekinesis, for example, appeared to present. I will add that I do not try to obtain these phenomena of more or less complete materialisations. I suffer them: for the facts do not proceed altogether according to the liking of the experimenter. I cannot say that these apparitions leave me indifferent; on the contrary, they interest me immensely; but I have the impression of being in the presence of a fact, which is too complicated to be usefully observed. It is not the same with raps and telekinesis: and I put forth all my efforts in order to restrict my studies and researches to these phenomena; for I have the feeling that we may be able to arrive at discovering the conditions of their production. I imagine—perhaps wrongly—that, henceforth, we can submit them to scientific discipline; I think that the study of raps and telekinetic phenomena is the necessary preliminary to the study of other, less comprehensible, facts. Therefore, I have devoted myself almost exclusively to their observation; nevertheless, I did not think I was able to dispense with relating everything I had seen. I am entirely ignorant of the signification of these diverse appearances; I may have made a mistake, though I do not think so, but it seems to me I have not the right to make a choice in my experiments, to withhold the one and relate the other. It behoves those who read me to put themselves in the same conditions under which I was placed, and observe in their turn. I confine myself to relating what I have seen. I will add that certain facts have appeared to me more certain than others, but my rôle of witness ends there.

The ascertainments I have made in what concerns luminous phenomena, permit me to give some useful indications. The first concern the methods of operation; the others are conclusions which I have drawn from my own experiences.

When seeking for simple, luminous phenomena, it is advisable to proceed as I have done for parakinetic and telekinetic phenomena. The sitters group themselves around a table, leaning their hands on it, or form a chain round the table without touching it. Needless to say, the obscurity ought to be as complete as possible. Under these conditions, lights can be obtained; and it is in this way, I observed the woman's face I have described.

The very fine lights which I saw with the young Bordeaux medium (pages 141 and following) were obtained in another manner, which seems to me better still. It is, moreover, the method adopted by professional mediums, perhaps because it favours the execution of fraudulent even more than genuine phenomena. This method consists in placing the medium in the cabinet and forming the chain, either round the table or in a half-circle, in which latter case the chain is not closed.

I have noticed that music and singing in common have a favourable influence on the production of the phenomena. This circumstance is, however, another cause for suspicion, because the noise of music and singing can drown that made by the medium in moving about.

Although I cannot consider the reality of the luminous phenomena observed by me as being so well established as that of certain other phenomena, I will none the less give the result of the ascertainments I think I have made thereon. I indicate them with every reserve; but the analogy they present with the ascertainments I made relative to raps and movements without contact, appeared to me useful to point out. It is one of the reasons which made me believe in their probability first of all; it is also the indication of the presumable existence of some general law governing all these phenomena, however different in appearance they may be.

The most important observations I have to make are, as before, the synchronism between the muscular action and the phenomenon ; the tendency to personification ; the physical fatigue experienced by all the experimenters after a successful seance.

The reasons why I conclude in the existence of this synchronism, are based upon a great number of observations made with Eusapia and other mediums. It seemed to me, in my experiments with Eusapia Paladino, that this latter preferred the breath to any other movement for the production of lights. This conclusion is uncertain, because I have not had occasion to examine many luminous phenomena with the Neapolitan medium.

My observations were more precise with the Bordeaux medium. Rubbing the hands together, rubbing the feet on the floor, breathing hard, squeezing hands tightly when the chain is formed ; all this provoked the apparition of the curious luminosities I have spoken about. True, these were also produced spontaneously ; but the movements executed appeared to me to have an action upon their manifestation.

Here again, the relation with the muscular contraction rather than with the movement itself seemed to me to exist, but I could not verify this point with the same certitude as with raps and movements without contact.

At all events, all reserves made for fraud, which I recognise possible though improbable, chanting or singing in common has appeared to me to have a favourable influence on the phenomena. I have had occasion of verifying this effect of intoned words ; I am unable to give its explanation, although we may suspect what it is likely to be. I will simply recall to mind the rôle which intoning or singing plays in religious ceremonies and in magical operations: the words 'incantations,' 'enchantments,' are very significative, from that point of view. The erudite will remember the magic songs of the 11th eclogue of Theocritus, and of the 8th of Virgil. The Hindoo magicians intone their mentrams. Nothing is more widespread than this belief in the supernatural virtue of singing, of the cadenced and modulated word. As the supernormal facts which I relate appear to me to have been known from the earliest times—however ill-interpreted they may have been — I am inclined to believe, that the superstitions relative to the magical power of song are not without a foundation of truth. This appears most improbable, and no one is more astonished than myself, to find myself admitting this possibility. I admit it nevertheless. I am inclined to think, that the greater part of popular beliefs have some foundation; the particle of truth which they contain is often very feeble, because ignorance, fear, imagination mask it under accessory and unreasonable beliefs, which smother it. There would be many interesting analogies to point out on this subject, if I had not systematically forbidden myself all manner of theoretical commentary. All the same, I will remark that the most worthy spiritists recommend singing or music during seances. I will cease, for I can only repeat here the considerations which I have already presented concerning the relation between the nervous energy, whatever it may be, and luminous phenomena; the connection appears to be very close indeed.

The physiognomical aspect of these phenomena is similar to that of sonorous and motor phenomena: It tends to personification, and it is probable, that imperfect luminous forms are but rude outlines of a real form. That form is not always human, although it appears to be so as a rule. I have given examples, where the appearance was that of an animal or of an object. I have never been able to converse with the form itself, when it was human; but I have experimented with mediums who thought they conversed with the forms. These all claim to be the spirits of deceased persons. What renders this unanimity particularly interesting is that one of the mediums, with whom I have observed the finest phenomena of human appearances, is by no means a spiritist.

Is he a victim of hallucination? It is possible; but then how are we to explain the fragment of truth which exists in his hallucination? I am well aware that impersonal memory is an inexhaustible source of knowledge, quite unknown to the normal personality; but there are cases, where the hypothesis of hypermnesia is scarcely acceptable. Here is an example. The medium, of whom I spoke a little while ago, has several times had the impression that a deceased person unknown to him, but known to me, entered his bedroom. The apparition was preceded by a noise of approaching footsteps, the door appeared to open, and the form entered. The form sat down at the foot of the bed, caressed the medium's arm, and took his hand. The sensitive was alarmed at these visions, which he looks upon as hallucinations, and does his best to rid himself of. At the end of three or four visits the form ceased to show itself, to my great regret, for I had therein the occasion of making an observation of the highest interest. Unfortunately, I had not sufficient influence over this remarkable sensitive, to induce him to lend a hand to the development of this phenomenon. The person reputed to appear had a very characteristic walk, and it would be sufficient for me to describe it, for those who knew the man to recognise him at once ; the vision had the same characteristic walk. Again, my friend wore whiskers. But the vision wore a full short beard, a detail which the doctor who attended him in his last illness verified ; my friend did not shave towards the end of his life. I was not aware of this.

The medium, living in the same town, could have known the man ; but if, contrary to his assertions, he had known him, how could he have seen him wearing a beard such as he never used to wear ? Interesting detail ! since the apparition, purporting to be my friend, wore a beard just as my friend had worn, not in his lifetime, but at the time of his death.

Further, the apparition appeared to manifest a desire to speak. It tried to reassure the alarmed medium ; but the latter always got up and turned on the light, before the phantom had time to speak. Now at that moment, an event was brewing, of which I would have been thankful to have been warned. The incident occurred, and the apparition was not seen again. This is an *ensemble* of facts of a nature to arouse attention. I have not been able to submit the case to thorough analysis, and I give it with reserve. It is the nearest approach to classical spiritism, which I have personally met with, but to me it does not seem to be convincing under the conditions in which I observed it; for the incident I refer to could easily have been foreseen by the medium.

Other personifications manifested themselves to this medium, but their character of apparent identity is less certain. One of them, with curious energy, insists that he is the person he claims to be: namely, Chappe d'Auteroche, a savant of the last century. His name appears in Larousse's Dictionary. The personification gave his name correctly, as well as the date of his death and where he died. He gave a Christian name which is not in Larousse, Adhémar instead of Jean, which the Dictionary gives. It would be interesting to know, if this name Adhémar is mentioned in other dictionaries. I will add that the apparition expresses itself in old French, but with a Norman accent. The medium hears it say 'moué' for 'moi,' 'étoué' for 'était,' etc. Now Chappe was born at Mauriac in Auvergne; therefore I cannot explain why his apparition should have a Norman accent. So far, however, I have not carefully analysed this personification.

I would like to have been able to experiment, more than I have been able to do, with the sensitive through whose medianity I have observed these curious facts. Perhaps the publication of this book will interest him, and induce him to give himself up to an attentive examination.[1]

It must not be concluded from what I have just related, that the intervention of my friend and of Chappe d'Auteroche appears to me to be real. Nothing in my experience authorises me to entertain this opinion. I relate these facts, because the emergence of these two personifications occurred at seances where I was present, and because they are closely associated with phenomena directly observed by me. I think we can draw a conclusion from these phenomena : it will be noticed that in the manner in which these visions are produced, there are certain features, which recall to mind the symbolisation and dramatisation of dreams. This indication is only temporary ; I have not enough elements of appreciation to be able to formulate it with any degree of certitude, but I point out this feature to experimenters, who, more favoured than I, may have opportunities for observing analogous phenomena with more convenience and for a greater length of time.

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[1] See Chapter vi., 'Recent Phenomena, etc.'

I will terminate these remarks by the recital of another fact of the same order, which I witnessed at Madame Agullana's. It occurred during an afternoon seance at her house. The medium, and two or three persons whom I did not know, were seated round a small table. One of the visitors was a small landed proprietor near Bordeaux. This visitor came for the first time ; he was accompanied by a rural constable, whom I knew. All at once Madame Agullana said to the newcomer, 'I see some one, who says he is your uncle ; he wears a cap ; his face is red ; he has a long beard ; he has sandy-coloured hair ; he smokes a short pipe ; he seems to have something the matter with his right arm, it is bent across his chest.' . . . She also gave other details. The visitor did not speak, a fact of which I took pains to assure myself.

When the details were all given, the visitor said that if the apparition claiming to be his uncle, was really his uncle, would he kindly say how he was addressed in his family. The table dictated typtologically, 'Touton L. P.' The stranger then said that Madame Agullana had given him the exact description of a second cousin[1] who had been dead for some months, and who, because of his inveterate habit of smoking, was nicknamed 'Touton-la-Pipe.'

I have seen several sincere, trustworthy people receive facts of the same kind through Madame Agullana. There is notably the history of the discovery of a lost debenture, which is curious and interesting; I was able to follow the different phases of this discovery. The indication appeared to emanate from the deceased husband of the owner of the debenture. Notwithstanding the interest which these observations presented, I cannot analyse them seriously, for they are insufficiently proved. The character of the medium has always seemed to me irreproachable, and her good faith above all suspicion; but the circumstances do not permit of an exact judgment. Neither do I consider myself authorised to affirm that the personality of 'Touton-la-Pipe' was quite unknown to the medium. The discovery of the debenture is perhaps only a coincidence. I have, however, related these facts to indicate the possibility of an order of research of a particularly suggestive nature. Some of the more influential members of the English Society for Psychical Research, Myers, Lodge, Hodgson, Hyslop, have entered upon these studies under excellent conditions of observation, and consider that they have been in communication with their deceased friends. I have not had the same chances, and my own experiences tend to make me adopt a different way of thinking. It is very possible that my colleagues are right, and I am wrong.

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[1] In France, a male cousin once removed is sometimes called 'oncle à la mode de Bretagne.'

Finally, the third statement which my observations permit me to make, is that the production of forms and luminous phenomena is accompanied with much fatigue on the part of the observers. I have already frequently pointed out this circumstance. On the occasion of the production of the facts described in the present chapter, I noticed certain peculiarities, which I will point out to the attention of experimenters. Fatigue is not felt in an equal degree by all the sitters. Some seem to feel none at all; and, as a rule, these latter are not good auxiliaries. It looks as though some persons were not capable of emitting the force employed. Others, on the contrary, emit it with great facility and tire quickly. I have not been able to study the relation which may exist, between the temperament of these two kinds of sitters and the production of the phenomena; but I have the impression, that this relation ought to exist; it appears to me in a function of the organism rather than in a *rapport* with the mental condition or moods. This makes one think of the belief professed by spiritists concerning incredulity. In several spiritistic groups failure is attributed to the presence of incredulous sitters; I am persuaded, that the beliefs of experimenters have nothing at all to do with the production of the phenomena observed, though it is certainly necessary to experiment seriously and without bias. I touched upon the results of my observations in that respect, when speaking about the harmony of the circle. The influence of bias would be explained, if the apparent consciousness of the personification could be considered as composed of the elementary consciousness of the sitters. This hypothesis does not appear to me to be demonstrated; but some of my experiments have made me think of its possibility, and I consider it ought to be submitted to examination. Things seem to happen, as though the nervous influx of the sitters created a field of force around the experimenters, and more especially the medium: Each experimenter would then act as a dynamogenic element, and would enter, for a variable part, into the production of the liberated energy. This energy would act beyond the apparent limits of the body, under conditions analogous to those governing its intracorporal action; that is to say, it would remain, to a certain extent, in connection with the superior or inferior nervous centres, conscious or unconscious. In this case we could understand, how the energy appears to depend, to a certain extent, upon the will of the sitters or the medium. We can even explain that it should appear to manifest an independent will, if its production were due to the activity of the nervous centres, the action of which is independent of ordinary consciousness. In that hypothesis, none of the sitters would recognise the trace of their normal personality in the evolution of the phenomena; and this is what generally happens. Sometimes, however, the medium or one of the sitters has the feeling, more or less precise, that a phenomenon is about to take place. Eusapia Paladino often announces what is coming. In this case the nervous energy, employed to realise the phenomenon, would be in connection with the conscious nervous centres of the medium only; and she would appear to the sitters to be subjected to an extraneous personal will. Eusapia attributes it to 'John,' who seems to have the characteristics of a secondary personality. Such appears to me to be the genesis of the personification, in the greater number of cases observed by me. There are others, however, where this explication is less satisfactory.

I do not hide from myself how difficult it is to admit the hypothesis I have just formulated. We are ill-prepared to consider the *psychic force* as identical, at least in its essence, with that which circulates in our nerves; and we are no better prepared to believe, that this force may be able to serve as a vehicle to a part of our personal or subliminal consciousness, or to think that it can preserve any connection with our psychic centres, when it acts beyond the limits of the body. Nevertheless, it looks as though it were really so, in the greater number of cases.

These data suffice to render comprehensible the possible mechanism of raps and movements without contact. It is not even necessary to suppose that the nervous force acts beyond the limits of the body, if we admit that the experimenters create around them a sort of magnetic field. The nervous force would reach a maximum of potentiality in the experimenters or in the medium; the objects placed within the field would have a different potentiality; according to the conditions, we would have phenomena of attraction or repulsion.

In this way we could understand motor phenomena. Raps are less easily explained, unless we consider them as facts analogous to electrical discharges. The rap would then be equivalent to the noise of a spark ; it would be invisible, though in some cases it might be perceived.

Lights and forms raise problems much more difficult of solution. They may be susceptible of the following explanation : we will suppose that particles of a very attenuated substance, *e.g.* the ether or any other kind of rarefied matter, existed capable of being acted upon by nerve force ; they would become charged, and dispersed, according to the lines of force, and these lines would be determined by the action of nerve centres, and would take form corresponding to those particular centres. They would have a certain plasticity, if I may thus express myself, and this plasticity would be in connection with those centres, possessing preponderating physiological activity.

If this connection existed with the superior ideative centres, we would have intelligible, definite forms, such as faces of human beings, heads of animals, and objects ; should connection with the inferior centres be established, undefined forms only would be obtained.

Their luminosity would depend upon the state of condensation of this rarefied matter of which they are constituted. Those subject to lesser condensation would be the most luminous ; and it might happen, that a form of greater density would be surrounded by a luminous atmosphere of lesser density.

One could, in this way, explain the relative independence of the forms, and phosphorescent nature of the pictures.

These are the hypotheses which might be made. I indicate them with much reserve, simply to show the theoretical route towards which my experience tends to direct me. I set them forth summarily, without discussing them in detail. I do not conceal from myself the fact that my ideas are far from being definite, and that the hypotheses I timidly express would fare badly under rigorous analysis. I have found no better, and I have the impression that they ought to contain a particle of truth.

I beg to be excused for having again infringed upon the rule I imposed on myself, for having presented purely theoretical considerations, which I am the first to acknowledge as premature. I have not seen the curious facts I relate without trying to penetrate into their cause, nor have I been able to resist the desire to make known, not what is a definite opinion, but what is for me a hypothesis worth examining.

Besides the phenomena described in this and preceding chapters, I have observed others which might be compared with them, for they seem to me to have a certain connection with them. I refer to tactile sensations such as touch, contact, and stamped impressions, etc. I will briefly describe them.

1. It is only with Eusapia Paladino, that I have felt tactile sensations in a positive manner. With this medium certain sitters, and especially those seated next to her, have the feeling of being touched on the back, on the arms, and hands, on the head and body. The phenomenon is usually produced under the following conditions. Eusapia's hands being or appearing to be held by her neighbours, the latter see the curtains come near them, and then feel themselves touched. The touch

is sometimes given without any movement of the curtains. The sensation of the touch varies: it is now that of a finger which is thrust into the thigh, now of a large hand resting on the back, now fingers pinching you, or seizing you on the head, the neck, chin, etc. Numerous examples of these contacts will be found in the report of the l'Agnélas experiments (*Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, 1896).

In our seances at Choisy 1896, the same phenomenon was often reproduced. In that series we were careful to have as much light as possible; we arranged a system of different coloured lights. One of the lights which gave us the best results was that of a lantern, the glass sides of which were replaced by parchment. It gave a softened yellowish light. From the private account of these seances I take the following extracts. Seance of the 8th October:—

'Eusapia's hands are still held and seen on the table. The Colonel then feels several touches, and a large hand rubs him through the curtains, on the top of his head.' . . . A more curious phenomenon happened before that; but only one of the medium's hands was visible.

'At the medium's request the lamp is turned in such a way as to lessen the light, which, however, is still sufficient to enable us to distinguish faces and hands by their whiteness. MM. de Rochas and de Gramont change places; Eusapia's hands are seen and held by General Thomassin on the left and M. de Gramont on the right. Eusapia frees her left hand for a moment, brings a part of the curtain on to the table, and glides her hand underneath it, in order to shelter it from the light; the General regains possession of the hand—under the curtain—and does not abandon it any more. The other hand, held by M. de Gramont, remains visible to every one. Almost instantly, General Thomassin feels on his thigh—and through the curtains, which bulge out in consequence—slight contacts; then the sensation of a pinch; afterwards, he distinguishes the contact of a woman's small hand, followed by the contact of a man's large hand. After that, he is struck with force on the shoulders and head by a large hand, outside the curtains. Every one hears the sound of the blows, and sees the hand; but every one sees the hand in a different fashion. M. de Rochas hardly sees it at all; General Thomassin sees it as greyish green; M. Watteville and M. Gramont see it as grey; M. Maxwell as greyish yellow. Eusapia determines different movements of the fluidic hand by mimicking them with her right hand, which is held by M. Gramont in sight of every one.'

This observation is interesting, but at first glance it appears very suspicious, because of the care taken by the medium to hide her hand under the curtain. General Thomassin held her hand well; I do not doubt but that it was Eusapia's hand he held; but let us accept for a moment the hypothesis of an artificial hand, which Eusapia had adroitly given to the General to hold. This is Dr. Hodgson's explanation. In that case, how would the hand, which touched General Thomassin, have been able to move over his back and head and strike him without any movement of the left arm being perceived? It is to be noted that the light was sufficient, and that the hand which gave the touches was seen by nearly all the observers. That hand was outside the curtains. I remember another seance held in the afternoon, in the course of which touches were lavished on all the experimenters, even on those who were furthest away from the medium.

In the three series of experiments, 1895, 1896, and 1897, made with Eusapia, I have had occasion of repeatedly verifying the phenomenon of touch. It appeared certain to me in a great number of cases. But it is a suspicious phenomenon, because of the extreme facility with which it can be simulated.

I remember a series of fraudulent experiments, in the course of which several touches were given. The first touches, through the curtains, made me think of the contacts obtained with Eusapia; but obscurity reigned complete, and I have reason to believe that the medium's left-hand neighbour touched me with a stick. I was also touched on the knee, but it was by a very natural hand, which belonged to one of the experimenters, a man of inferior intellect. Inexperienced people are easily deceived by these contacts; however, the marked difference which exists between the falsidical and the veridical is quickly perceived, when we have become accustomed to these phenomena. I do not advise experimenters to put themselves under the conditions in which these facts are observed, as they are very unfavourable for the examination of the phenomenon. These conditions, as far as I have been able to judge, are :—(1) the formation of a chain around a table, the medium being seated with his back to the curtains of the cabinet; (2) an extremely feeble light, or none at all. It is only with Eusapia that I have obtained touches with light, and even then the light was of the weakest.

These touches, besides having the inconvenience of carrying little conviction with them, because of the conditions under which they are obtained, have also the disadvantage of impressioning persons who are easily moved and frightened. I have seen very courageous people affected by these touches. Therefore we must not try to obtain them, until we are already familiarised with the observation of physical phenomena.

It is to be noted, that the phenomenon of *attouchement* presents the characteristics pointed out in those I have already examined. In the first place, we note the correlation which exists between the movements of the medium and the contact. I gave an example just now, when relating the phenomena of which General Thomassin was the object. The movements of the right hand which touched him were mimicked by Eusapia's right hand, which was visible, held by M. de Gramont, and seen by every one.

Here is another example, taken from my notes, in which synchronous movements were executed by one of the experimenters :—

'John' (the secondary personality) 'then asks M. Rochas, who holds Eusapia's left hand in his right hand, to put his left hand on Eusapia's neck, the fingers stretched out as though in the act of magnetising ; he then tells him to lower his fingers. M. Rochas executes the movement several times, and each time M. Maxwell, who holds the medium's right hand, feels synchronous touches on his right shoulder, which is, at the very least, eighteen inches away from the medium.' This fact may be compared with those I indicated when dealing with raps and motor or luminous phenomena. We see how constant the relation is between the medium's movements and the phenomenon. This is a first general ascertainment. If I might venture to use the expression, I would say that we are in the presence of one of the first laws governing the production of these paranormal phenomena. I have not sufficiently observed the phenomenon of touch to be able to say, that the relation indicated exists between the muscular contraction and the phenomenon, rather than between the phenomenon and the movement executed; but some facts, far too few, it is true, tend to make me think it is so.

Finally, the experimenters, and especially the medium, are very fatigued after the production of the phenomenon of touch.

The influence of light seems to be very unfavourable. I have not had occasion of observing touches in full light, as I have so often done with raps and movements without contact. Almost total obscurity was necessary with Eusapia. This circumstance brings the phenomenon of *attouchement* into conjunction with that of materialisation. This is interesting, for if the touches are due to the condensation of some matter, as materialised forms appear to be, there is room to think that the two phenomena are closely connected, and that it is the same substance which, in becoming condensed, produces them both. This is what I have observed, notably at l'Agnélas, when I saw a hand and arm touch M. Sabatier's head, at the moment the latter mentioned having been touched on the head.

We see how much a calm and impartial examination of the facts reveals common conditions for their production, and similarities between some among them.

11. Stamped impressions or imprints bring us into the presence of a category of phenomena of the same order. Pressure appears to be exercised upon a material substance instead of upon the sitters. If that substance be soft enough, the impression of the form which has exercised the pressure may be left upon it. I have only twice observed this phenomenon, and that was with Eusapia. It was at Choisy in 1896. The first time, we obtained the impression of the mounts of the fingers in lamp-black. The conditions of observation were not good. The second time, the impression was marked in clay. I take the following extract from our report :—

'The dish containing the plastic clay is put in the centre of the table. Almost immediately the dish, which weighs nearly four lbs., is lifted up and placed in equilibrium on the left arm of M. de Rochas, whose left hand continues to hold Eusapia's right hand. M. de Rochas feels three distinct, successive pressures of the dish resting on his arm ; then a friendly pressure on the back of his arm apprises him, that the phenomenon is accomplished. We carry the dish away at once, and in the daylight we see finger-prints in the clay ; the prints look as though the fingers had been enveloped in some material of fine texture, the woof being distinctly visible in the clay.' I did not observe this fact with enough precision to be able to retain it as a demonstrated fact. I point it out, nevertheless, because it permits one to preserve the material trace of the phenomenon. Other observers have obtained better imprints with Eusapia.

I have seen some which represent a distorted likeness of the medium's face. I think this phenomenon ought to be observed with care, if one has the occasion to meet with mediums capable of producing it. I will point out the following fact to the attention of possible observers: the almost constant presence of a kind of woof, as if the object which made the impression was covered with thin gauze. This circumstance is at first sight suspicious; but here, again, as always when we are in presence of these unfamiliar manifestations, we must not be in too great a hurry to conclude in fraud, and say that the medium put a wet piece of gauze over face and hands, in order to avoid soiling the loam and bearing tell-tale traces of cheating. But I recognise that this is the explanation which ought to present itself before any other; and we must not put it to one side, unless we have sufficient reasons for doing so. At the same time, we must not jump to the conclusion of fraud solely because of this gauzy appearance. There is something interesting in the presence of this gauze. The faces I have seen were all framed in a sort of milky-looking veil. Personally, I have rarely seen faces free of this. I have not observed it around material objects nor around animals' heads. Neither do I observe it in hypnagogic illusions. I will point out the following observation of MM. Brincard and Béchade on the subject:—

'M. de Rochas feels himself touched on the face as though by a beard, and sees standing out in relief, against the part of the room best lighted up by the window, a long black lock of wavy hair. MM. Brincard and Béchade have the sensation that their heads are enveloped in transparent black gauze, which seems to fall on to their shoulders ; it disappears before they have time to seize it.'

I did not notice these traces of tissue, with the undoubtedly fraudulent impressions which have been shown me or done in my presence. I am going to give an example, to show how an attentive examination can reveal fraud.

At a seance, I was one day shown the impression in some plastic substance of a small death's head ; a young man presented it to me as an authentic impression. This appeared abnormal to me, for a death's head is not a common thing in serious seances, and for my part I have never seen a repugnant or painful phenomenon. An attentive examination revealed to me traces of the finger-tips, which had held the object while it was being pressed on the plastic substance.

At another seance at which I was present, one of the experimenters prepared some plates of cement. He placed them himself upon the top of a wardrobe. At the end of the seance finger-prints were found in the cement. These prints had been made while the experimenter was placing the plate on the wardrobe, and, of course, normally made by him. In these two cases, the impressions were distinct and bore no traces of woof. Therefore, such traces are not necessarily indications of fraud, since tricksters do not always use material to preserve themselves from stains, when they make the fraudulent impression.

As for photographs, I have never obtained any paranormal ones. It is true I have given no attention to this order of experimentation. I will say nothing about it therefore, since I have no personal fact of interest to relate thereon. The existence of paranormal photography is affirmed by sincere and honourable men, and their experiments deserve to be resumed. The method of operating is simple. The medium is photographed in daylight, when in a state of trance; photography by magnesium light is not to be recommended for many reasons, chiefly because it renders fraud particularly easy of execution. Never use any but your own plates, never let them out of your possession for an instant, change the plates yourself, expose and develop them yourself.

I remember one of my friends, a superior military officer, once showed me some extraordinary photographs, on which we saw abnormal forms beside the medium. I told my friend he had been imposed upon. Too honest himself to admit he could be the victim of disloyal trickery, the officer put no faith in my criticisms, and assured me that the photographs had been taken by himself with his own camera, and declared he had not lost sight of the apparatus for a second. His affirmations did not modify my opinion. Later on, when carefully discussing the conditions of the experiment, the officer acknowledged that he had interrupted the seance for lunch, and had left his camera at the medium's house in the meanwhile.—The latter had taken advantage of his absence either to change the plates and substitute exposed ones, or to make a fraudulent exposure on my friend's plates.

The author of this fraud was, moreover, obliged to acknowledge the imposture. I wonder what motive this young man could have had in cheating! I believe he acted out of pure childishness—having a tendency to hysteria.

In photography there are several ways of defrauding; the most usual is by double exposure. A shrewd use of sulphite of quinine permits of certain curious operations, it appears. I have not verified this.

CHAPTER V

PSYCHO-SENSORY AND INTELLECTUAL PHENOMENA

UNDER this somewhat vague title I am bringing certain facts together, which differ greatly from those I have been examining. In reality, the facts so far related by me refer to material manifestations, and it was merely as an accessory, that I pointed out the intelligent character some of these manifestations presented. I will now describe the means best adapted for obtaining not *physical* but *intellectual* phenomena, properly so-called ; that is to say, phenomena which are interesting solely because of the ideas expressed, or because of the signification of the images produced, and not at all because of the conditions under which they are obtained.

I have studied this category of phenomena with less interest than sonorous, motor or luminous phenomena, where observation is relatively simple. Intellectual phenomena can only be studied indirectly, and in order to verify them, we are generally obliged to trust to the statement of a third person. I think these are bad conditions of observation. This reserve made, I will divide these phenomena into two wide categories :—

1. Sensory automatism.
2. Motor automatism.

I. SENSORY AUTOMATISM

I thus designate phenomena produced by the spontaneous activity of our senses, and which do not appear to be due to exterior excitation. They border on hallucination. They are observed in the different sensory spheres. I will only examine olfactory, auditory, and visual sensations; tactile impressions were studied in the last chapter. As for gustatory sensations, they are very rare and without interest.

(*a*) *Olfactory sensations.*—These consist of a special odour. I have never observed any in the seances at which I have been present. In one series, however, the medium associated the odour of Jasmine with the manifestation of certain personifications. To me this sensation seemed to be purely subjective; it was constant.

An odour of ozone is often perceived after luminous phenomena have been obtained, a fact which ought to be borne in mind. It may be compared with the odour of ozone, perceived in the vicinity of powerful static machines, which give off electricity at *very high potentiality.* Here is an analogy which is, perhaps, not altogether fortuitous; these facts, however, are unintelligible.

(*b*) *Auditory sensations.*—I do not speak of sonorous phenomena. I now enter directly into the study of intellectual phenomena, that is to say, phenomena having a signification more or less precise and intelligible.

Auditory phenomena may be divided into two categories: provoked automatisms, and spontaneous automatisms or *clairaudience.* The first may be considered as hallucinations induced by diverse methods. The simplest method consists in the use of certain shells, horns, trumpets, or, in a word, any object capable of augmenting and allowing the perception of those external or internal sounds, which are not usually perceptible to the hearing. This is what is observed particularly with some sea-shells. When we apply them to the ear, we hear a murmur or a slight rumbling sound. This sensation is common to every one, and children are accustomed to play at 'listening to the sound of the sea in the sea-shells.'

Some people do not hear this sound, or rather, when they listen, it quickly disappears and makes way for words and phrases. I know a subject with whom this faculty exists, but circumstances, unfortunately, have prevented me from studying him carefully. I point out, to the attention of observers, the interest which this automatism presents; the rapidity of communication is very great; in this way there is a greater output than with automatic writing, and it is less tiring for the sensitive. The only precaution to observe is to take down all he says in shorthand. We must accustom him to repeat, instantly, everything he hears, because words heard in this way are speedily forgotten—as in dream—but amnesia is not the sole point of resemblance between this automatism and dream. It has much analogy with visual automatism, but it has an interesting advantage over the latter. Visual images are those which offer the highest degree of symbolism; they are vague, wanting in precision, and require interpretation. Auditory hallucinations, on the contrary, have greater precision. Perhaps this is due to language, the usual manner in which auditory images are revealed. On the other hand, they are not so rich, and contain less detail than visual images do.

The meaning of auditory messages is seldom very clear; but there are cases where it is wonderfully so. Such are the chief features of provoked auditory phenomena. I have given too little attention to this phase of manifestation, to be able to enter into a more complete analysis of it.

Clairaudience is more frequent; perhaps this is due to the negligence of experimenters, who do not think of using the methods of induction I have just described.

I have rarely observed the existence of isolated auditory hallucinations; I have always observed them associated with visual hallucinations; therefore I will study them after these last, when examining mixed phenomena.

(*c*) *Visual sensations.*—Observable, visual phenomena are very numerous, and have already been the object of exhaustive studies. I will again divide these into provoked and spontaneous phenomena. Of course, I am speaking of hallucinations experienced by sensitives out of seance hours. In this part of my analysis, I am replacing the word *medium* by the word *sensitive*, which seems to me to define more correctly the distinguishing features, of those persons who have the faculties I am going to describe. This word conveys the correct idea, that the facts observed belong to the sphere of sensibility.

One of the oldest known methods of inducing visual hallucination is the use of a crystal ball. I have no need to recall to mind the practices of former fortune-tellers, nor the history of John Dee, nor the numerous recitals handed down to us by ancient chroniclers, novelists, etc. The crystal ball and the black mirror are the best methods; but the ordinary mirror, a glass of water, a decanter, a shoemaker's wooden ball, the finger-nail, the watch-glass, any polished surface, in fact, may serve to induce hallucination; but I only recommend the first methods—they are certainly the best; a glass of water, a decanter, a syphon of seltzer-water, the thumb-nail, polished surfaces, etc., may serve to induce hallucination, but these last methods only succeed with very highly sensitive subjects.

I have carefully studied crystal-gazing, and though I have remarked individual differences in each sensitive, I think I may say that, as far as working methods are concerned, I have come to the following conclusions:—

The material of which the object is composed is not a matter of indifference. Balls of rock-crystal have given me the best results. I have seen people, incapable of receiving visions with ordinary glass, obtain them in a tiny ball of natural crystal. Objects in rock-crystal have the inconvenience of being very expensive.

Ordinary glass gives good results, but care should be taken that the ball contains no air bubbles or other defects. They must be as homogeneous as possible.

The ball may be spherical or egg-shaped. I think the elliptical form is, perhaps, the best; reflections are more easily avoided with this shape.

The size is a matter of indifference; personally, I prefer rather large balls. I have, nevertheless, obtained just as good results with balls of only one centimetre in diameter as with balls of six or seven centimetres in diameter.

The crystal may be white, blue, violet, yellow, green; it may be opalescent or transparent; but, I think, the best results are obtained with white transparent balls; blue or amethyst coloured crystals are also very good, and tire the eyes less than others.[1]

When looking into the ball, it should be sheltered from reflection, as it should offer a uniform tint, without any brilliant points. To obtain this result, it may be enveloped in a piece of dark foulard or velvet, or held in the hollow of the hand, or even at the finger-tips, provided the conditions mentioned above have been observed. The object ought to be placed within the range of normal vision; the gaze should not be directed on to the surface of the crystal, but *in the crystal itself*. The knack of gazing inside the crystal is speedily acquired.

Mirrors also give very good results. They can be made like ordinary mirrors, or black like the famous mirrors of Bhatta, which are made of a special composition. Sensitives say that the mirror should not reflect anything: it should present a uniform tint, *e.g.* that of the sky, blue or grey, but without the mixture of these colours as would be the case with a cloudy sky; in a room the ceiling may be reflected, if it be monochrome.

Under these conditions of operation I have sometimes observed results so extraordinary, as to confound the imagination. They appeared to me to tend towards demonstrating Kant's idea of the relativity and contingency of time and space. It is very difficult to admit, that these two ordinates of our perceptions are exactly what they seem to be, unless we push the theory of coincidence to the absurd. But this would be shutting the door on all discussion, and on all intelligent examination of a fact apparently abnormal.

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[1] As crystal-gazing seems to me one of the most curious phenomena to study, I will take the liberty of mentioning that well-made crystal balls may be found at Leymarie, 42 Rue Saint-Jacques, Paris; at the Society for Psychical Research, 20 Hanover Square, London, W.; or Mrs. Venman, Sugden Road, Lavender Hill, London, S.W. The price of the globes varies from 6s. to 9s.; those of ovoids, from 8s. to 10s. The best thing to do would be to look for a ball in rock-crystal, the price of which would vary from 4s. to £8. They must be cut to order, for it is extremely difficult to find any ready made. M. Servan, jeweller at Bordeaux, furnishes good ones.

My observations have been made with different persons, and a great many have been pointed out to me. Sensitives, possessing the faculty of seeing in the crystal, are not rare. The analysis of the facts I have observed, or of which I hold first-hand reports, allows me to class these 'hallucinations' (?) under six categories of increasing interest:—

A. Imagination—images, ordinary hallucination.

B. Forgotten souvenirs, recalled to memory in the form of visions.

C. Passed events, of which the sensitive affirms to have always been ignorant.

D. Present events, certainly unknown to the sensitive.

E. Future events.

F. Facts of doubtful interpretation.

This grouping shows the curious gradation observed in these visions. First of all, disorderly and illogical activity as in dreams; then, more orderly activity: knowledge of forgotten facts, knowledge of past events unknown to the sensitive, knowledge of present events unknown to the sensitive, apparent prescience. I will give some examples.

A. Imagination—images are by far the most frequent. This phenomenon is analogous to ordinary visual hallucination, and seems to me to present the characteristic features of dream. This is hardly the place to discuss the state of consciousness during dream; for the form I am giving my recital would not bear any long psychological analyses. I will simply confine myself to resuming the conclusions of the detailed analysis, which I made in a work dealing with this subject.

The consciousness which works habitually in us, that which is manifested in our everyday life, is the *personal consciousness*. It is around this that are grouped the souvenirs accessible to our normal personality, to that part of ourselves which we call 'I.' This personal consciousness asserts itself in the highest acts of the psychic life, in the comparison of images one with another, in abstraction, judgment, and the voluntary selection of acts, which appear to us equally possible. This selection is the expression of our voluntary activity, personally conscious; it is determined by the comparison of acts between themselves, by the examination of their probable advantageous or disadvantageous consequences, by the appreciation of their morality or immorality, according to the social laws of the day, etc. Personal consciousness is the foundation of all our intelligent life; practically, it alone appears to exist, and its disappearance seems to us to annihilate our own personality.

In reality, such is not the case. With certain invalids, complete or partial modifications of the personal consciousness may be observed. Sometimes the notion of personality disappears. There are patients who suddenly forget everything, even to their own name. All their antecedent life is effaced, and they appear to return to the state they were in at birth. They have to learn again how to speak, to eat, and to dress themselves. Sometimes the amnesia is not so complete. I have been able to observe a patient, who had forgotten everything which had any connection whatever with his own personality. He was absolutely ignorant of all he had ever done, did not remember where he was born, who his parents were, or what his name was. He was thirty years of age.

Organic memory and memories organised apart from the personality subsisted. He could read, write, draw, and displayed a certain amount of musical talent. Amnesia, with him, was limited to all facts connected with his antecedent personality; it presented the type of systematised losses of memory. This is what is called in medical phraseology *amnésie de dépersonnalisation.*

In a lesser degree, amnesia only affects limited periods of life. Epileptics and hysterics often present the phenomenon of *ecmnesia,* a term chosen by the eminent professor of clinical medicine at the university of Bordeaux, M. Pitres, who was the first to point out this phenomenon with hysterical subjects. The patient forgets a part of his life, believes he is ten, fifteen, thirty years younger than he really is, and behaves as though he were at the age he thinks he is. The souvenirs of his ulterior life cease to be accessible to his conscious personality, which finds itself brought back exclusively to the elements which constituted it, at the time the ecmnesia carries him to. Every idea, foreign to that diminished personality, remains unintelligible to him. In order to make him understand, we must speak to him only of what he knew at the epoch to which he has been brought back.

Besides these disappearances or *amoindrissements de la personnalité* of the personal consciousness, which may be permanent or transitory, we also observe *qualitative* without *quantitative* alterations of the personal consciousness. These are changes or variations of personality, which have been well studied in hysterical subjects, but which also exist in other invalids, notably epileptics and victims of certain poisons.[1]

To sum up, the personal consciousness is susceptible of total or partial disappearance, or of being replaced by another consciousness which can be absolutely foreign to the normal personal consciousness, or preserve more or less close relationship with it, *e.g.* the patient who undergoes a change of personality may retain all the souvenirs of the normal personality A and those of the new personality B. But in an almost absolute manner the normal personality A is ignorant of all which concerns B. This is the type of periodical amnesia.

The clinical study of diseases of personality permits observation of the above facts. I ought to say that, in practice, they do not present the simplicity of the *schéma* which I have just given. Curious problems arise from the nature itself of amnesia, its degree, its mechanism, problems impossible to treat here.

But the facts I have summarily exposed already reveal an important truth, which curable, transitory amnesia clearly demonstrates: this is, that souvenirs can exist in a latent state in the general consciousness, and be inaccessible to the personal consciousness. Let us suppose that A forgets the ten previous years of his life—the result of a fall or nervous crisis. This amnesia will perhaps last for six months, during which period he will believe himself to have returned to the age of fifteen, when he is really twenty-five. All the events of his life between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five will have entirely disappeared from his memory for six months; then they will, more or less abruptly, reappear. Their temporary disappearance clearly shows that these souvenirs have been preserved somewhere, and that they were not really lost. We cannot affirm that they were accessible to the general and impersonal consciousness in every case; but nevertheless we can affirm it for hysteria, according to the observations of Pitres, Janet, and others; and, according to Régis, for certain poisons. The facts studied by these savants show, that souvenirs inaccessible to the normal personality were known to the general consciousness. For example, an amnesic patient can recover all his souvenirs when he is put to sleep; this is what Régis has demonstrated even in certain cases of amnesia from blood-poisoning. Janet, on his side, has established that these souvenirs, forgotten by the personal consciousness, can be evoked by certain automatisms (notably automatic writing), and are therefore at the disposition of the impersonal consciousness, that is to say, of that general consciousness of which personal consciousness seems to be only a part.

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[1] Interested readers will find a complete analysis of these facts in Azam's celebrated work, *Hypnotisme et double conscience*, Alcan; in Pitres' book, *Leçons sur l'hystérie*, Alcan; and in Janet's *L'automatisme psychologique*, Alcan. It is essential to know at least these three books, if we wish to observe, profitably, the delicate phenomena I am discussing in this chapter.

This fact, which the study of nervous pathology has demonstrated, is certainly general. The troubles of hysteria and other nervous diseases only exaggerate a normal phenomenon. Our personality does not burden itself with all the souvenirs, which our general consciousness appears to possess: the greater part of the things we have seen, learned, heard, etc., are forgotten; but this forgetfulness is probably relative, and only extends to the personal consciousness. It is also variable, and, according to circumstances, the souvenirs accumulated in the general consciousness are at one time more accessible to the personal consciousness, and less so at another time. If the personal memory be over-excited, *exalté*, we have hypermnesia. The facts which spring up in the personal consciousness have been so completely forgotten by it that they sometimes appear to be new; souvenirs present themselves to the consciousness without being identified by it, and we commit errors on the localisation of the mnesic image in time and space; this is what we call *paramnesia.*

The variations of the personal consciousness relative to memory, whose rôle in the constitution of the personality of the *self* is preponderant, are therefore translated clinically by amnesiæ, hypermnesiæ, paramnesiæ; but the variations pointed out are not limited to memory, they extend to other operations of the mind. I indicated just now, that the personal consciousness was only a facet of that more general consciousness existing in us, a consciousness where all antecedent experiences are piled up, where all our sensations are registered, be our personal consciousness aware or unaware of them. This general consciousness is in itself impersonal, at least in relation to our normal personality. This latter is only one of the currents which circulate in that consciousness, its preponderance, as Myers has indicated, is probably only a consequence of its greater practical utility in daily life, and not an indication of its absolute superiority ; but there is one thing to point out, this is that we are accustomed to connect with that personal consciousness all the operations of our usual intelligence. Our reasonings, volitions, judgments, whatever they may be, are grouped around our conscious personality, or rather are founded upon its apparent activity. The consequence is, that every time the sentiment of personality in the consciousness varies, our reasonings, volitions, and judgments will vary in the same proportion. Thoughts which come to us will cease to be chosen by us, and will apparently come of their own accord ; their associations will escape all logic, their succession will be rapid and incoherent for our personality, which will look on at their evolution powerless to direct it. The weakening of the sentiment of personal participation, in the acts of the psychical life, is then translated by the diminution of our faculty to choose the images evoked in the consciousness, by the diminution of our power of control over their evolution, by the helplessness in which we are, not only to judge them according to the rules of reason, but also to reject the most illogical interpretations, which offer themselves to us or impose themselves upon us. In a word, the weakening of the will, of the judgment, is associated with that of the personal consciousness.

We also observe a corresponding attenuation in the faculty of abstraction. Ideas are accompanied by their pictured or motor representations. Sometimes they are only expressed by pictures, and are presented in a symbolical form, or are dramatised ; *e.g.* the idea of the death of a relative will not be expressed with precision, as is sometimes the case in verbal or written hallucinations, but by a picture representing the relation in a coffin, or depicting his burial.

Such are the psychological expressions of the weakening of the personal element in the consciousness.

We must not conclude, therefrom, that the impersonal consciousness is incapable of intelligent operation. No such thing; and events prove that the impersonal or subliminal consciousness is capable of accomplishing, with great perfection, the most complicated intellectual acts, without the personal consciousness being aware of it. In these cases, when the result of the operation is transmitted to the personal consciousness, this latter perceives it under the symbolical or dramatical form I pointed out.

Observation shows, that all the features I have just described as being met with in cases where participation of the personal consciousness with our mental or physical activity is diminished, are to be found in hallucination and in dreams.[1]

I beg to be excused for this digression; it was indispensable in order to develop, in a comprehensive manner, the analogies which are presented between dreams and hallucinations provoked by crystal-gazing, and the transcendental character which these visions can present, without being, however, supernatural. These considerations set forth, I arrive at the recital of some facts I have observed.

The way in which imagination-images or hallucinations are induced, with most of the sensitives I have examined, is nearly always the same. I will describe it, pointing out at the same time that the formation of the hallucinatory image is the same in nearly every case, be the visual impression imaginary, or be it the expression of a true fact, past, present, or future.

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[1] Readers, interested to know my ideas on this point, will find them more extensively developed in my book, *L'Amnésie et les troubles de la conscience dans l'épilepsie.*

I have shown how to hold the crystal, and how to look at it. The sensitive, having fixed his eyes on the crystal for a few seconds or minutes—the time varies according to individuals—sees an opalescent, milky tint come over the crystal. I know a sensitive,—an intelligent and well-educated lady—who compares this impression, to that produced on the eye by rising mists and fleeting clouds. For her, the milky tint in the crystal is in movement. It breaks away like a cloud or mist, to disclose the hallucinatory image completely formed. To another sensitive, the cloud appears first of all immobile, and then becomes condensed into grey forms, which gradually become coloured and mobile. This sensitive enters so completely into the hallucination, that, as a rule, he thinks he is transported to the landscape he is gazing at; he has not only a hallucination of sight, but a hallucination of all the senses. Most people see the image in the crystal, but believe they see it life-size. The dimension of the crystal has no influence on the apparent dimension of the image;—at least, this is what I have nearly always remarked.

What I say of the mode of induction of the image in the crystal can be applied to any other mode of induction—mirror, glass of water, decanter, etc.

The cause of the vision is sometimes an association of ideas or images, which is easy to trace. Here is an example: I was once in a spiritistic group, and among those present were several sensitives presenting subconscious or paraconscious automatisms, with the features of ordinary somnambulism. I begged one young girl, of about fifteen or sixteen years old, to look into a white crystal ball of four centimetres in diameter. Almost without transition she saw goldfish in the ball. Every one knows the spherical bowls in which goldfish are put; as it happened, there was a bowl of this kind in the room. The idea of a transparent bowl was naturally associated with that of goldfish; this subconscious association provoked the visual image of the fish. Facts of this kind are the simplest; their psychological mechanism is easy to penetrate; the associations of images are almost logical, and their dreamlike character is scarcely marked. In the above case, the impossibility of placing the fish in a crystal ball is not perceived by the consciousness, which suffers the succession of images empirically associated; the globe of water containing the fish resembled in its form and aspect the transparent glass ball; therefore, the latter evoked the image of the former, and the fish which it contained. This association is very intelligible.

Here is another example borrowed from experiments I made with a remarkable sensitive—the one with whom the hallucination becomes generalised. This person, looking in the crystal, perceived a railway-station, and saw portmanteaux in the luggage-room. He then plunged right into the dream, and imagined he was going to take away his own portmanteau; he entered the luggage-room, took his trunk and opened it. It contained a particularly horrible dead body, which leaped out of the portmanteau, and bitterly complained of being disturbed. It threw itself upon the sensitive, who immediately fled, pursued by the dead body. After a desperate chase, the sensitive darted into a road which crossed a park. This park, in reality, is situated at more than six hundred miles from the railway-station, where he believed he saw the portmanteaux: this distance had disappeared in the vision. The dead body took a corresponding road; the two roads met on a hill, where the persecutor made a dead set at the sensitive; the latter fell, and the dead body stopped and bent down to strike him. The visionary gave him a kick in the stomach, and stretched him full length on the ground. The hallucination then ceased abruptly, and the sensitive found himself back in his room, in front of the crystal. The vision was so intense, that he was still upset with fright, and breathless from running.

This hallucination is of a dreamlike character, and reminds one of certain kinds of delirium. I have often questioned the sensitive carefully, in order to try to reconstitute the psychological elements of his hallucinations, and for this particular hallucination, as I have related it, I will indicate the result of my inquiry:—

1. The sensitive has often seen dead bodies. He is not afraid of them; he feels no repugnance even when touching them.

2. He has travelled a great deal, but has no souvenir of any connection whatever between his portmanteau and dead bodies, except the associations which stories of the nature of the Gouffé affair may evoke.[1]

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[1] A lawyer who was murdered, and whose dead body, much hacked about, was found in a trunk in the luggage-room of a railway-station in France.

3. The chase occurred at a spot known to the sensitive, who had, as it happened, gone, one day, to that very spot on a walking expedition with one of his friends, under some conditions recalling those of the hallucination, notably the choice of different roads; the two roads corresponded and met as in the vision.

4. He did not fall, and has no conscious souvenir, which can explain his struggle with the dead body.

This curious hallucination shows us an admixture of true images and fantastic images, these latter, however, composed of real elements. The duration of this hallucination, so full of events, was very short. This is another feature observed in dreams. We see here the trace of queer associations, some explicable, others not so. The idea of a railway-station awakens that of portmanteaux; that of the dead body is already abnormal, but comprehensible, the sensitive being sufficiently acquainted with contemporary criminal literature to know of the Gouffé affair. The leap of the dead body out of the valise, the flight of the sensitive, and the pursuit of the dead body after him, are abnormal associations. The first is difficult to explain; the flight and pursuit are more easily explained. The first of these ideas naturally suggests the second. The idea of pursuit awakens the idea of running; this, in its turn, awakens the idea of the place where the sensitive has really run a race; and, notwithstanding its illogism, that association is accepted, though the railway-station, where the scene begins, be more than six hundred miles from the park where the chase takes place.

All these associations bear the characteristic stamp of dreams.

B. Visions of past and forgotten facts present a different appearance. The following is an example :—The sensitive, in the course of conversation, was asked to sing one of Delmet's songs. He could not remember two lines of one of the verses, and was obliged to pass them over. I had the curiosity to improvise an experiment, and I begged the sensitive to look into a crystal. The forgotten lines were read by him in the crystal. Facts of this nature—and they are very numerous in technical literature—can be explained by the action of the impersonal or subliminal consciousness. The souvenir forgotten by the personal consciousness exists in the general consciousness, which has need of scenic effects in order to transmit its message to the personal consciousness; hence we have sensorial, automatic, visual activity, and the reading of the forgotten words, which appear printed in the crystal. I will not dwell upon facts of this kind ; they are so well known.

C. The third category of visions comprises the perception of past events, which the medium affirms never to have known. It is evident that these facts can, in the greater number of cases, come under the preceding category, and be but forgotten souvenirs. But I have reason to think it is not always so, and that a certain number of cases exists, in which knowledge of the past appears to be acquired in a supernormal manner. This is only an impression, which I draw from the reality of certain premonitory facts observed by me.

As an example of the facts I am describing at present, I will cite the following :—

A sensitive one day looked into the crystal ; he suddenly saw the words 'Salon de 1885,' and a series of pictures, announced by their titles, passed before his eyes. The pictures, thus seen by him, had really been exhibited in the salon of 1885. In 1885 the sensitive was too young, to have had any personal knowledge of the salon of that year ; but nothing is easier than to read descriptions of past salons, or to procure reproductions of the pictures exhibited there. The sensitive, whose good faith is above suspicion, affirms having no conscious souvenir of a like reading. He believes he has never seen or read anything concerning the salon of 1885, but he confines himself to affirming the non-existence of a conscious souvenir. It is, nevertheless, possible, as he acknowledges, that he may have glanced over a former catalogue or criticism without remembering it.

Facts of this kind are never convincing, for it is very difficult to know exactly, if the sensitive has ever had knowledge of the fact, which emerges in the vision. I cite the above case, as an example only, without pronouncing an opinion on its signification.

D. I have had no occasion of observing induced hallucinations representing a scene actually happening ; at least, I have never been able to verify any in a satisfactory manner.

E. The cases of premonition I have obtained are, on the contrary, relatively numerous. I have, personally, observed some of them, and have obtained first-hand accounts of others. Here are my most interesting cases :—

I had given a crystal to Monsieur X., a friend of mine, who is much interested in psychical researches. Madame X. has the faculty of seeing in the crystal, but I have never had the opportunity of interrogating her upon her visions. The fact, which her husband related to me, concerns a woman who is cashier in a large restaurant at Bordeaux. Monsieur X., who sometimes lunches at this restaurant, one day showed the crystal to the cashier ; the latter looked into it and saw therein a small dog. She did not recognise the dog, and the vision appeared to have no interest.

Shortly afterwards, Monsieur X. was again lunching in the same restaurant. The cashier called him up to her, and told him she was much astonished, because she had just received the present of a small dog, exactly like the one she had seen in the crystal.

Another lady sometimes sees visions in a mirror ; these visions are formed on the glass of a wardrobe, which is placed facing a window, thus partly satisfying the conditions indicated further back. The recital, which was given me of these visions by her friends, was confirmed by the lady herself.

She saw a man seated on the footpath of a certain street, the man was wounded, in a particular manner, on the forehead ; a piece of skin was torn away and lay over the eye. Among other details about his costume was a sack, which the man had rolled round his neck ; on the sack the letters V. L. were printed. The lady, in her vision, saw herself speak to the wounded man, take him to the hospital and have his wound dressed.

She went out on the morning of the next day, met the wounded man at the spot she had seen him the day before, and her vision came true to the letter, even to the detail of the sack around the neck, and the letters which were printed upon it.

Another time this lady perceived, always under the same conditions, that is in the glass of the wardrobe, one of her friends, who is married to a government officer abroad, where he is consul of a sister-power. This lady, in the vision, appeared to be walking up the street Tourny at Bordeaux, just where it opens out into the square Gambetta. The details of the costume were noted by the observer :—a light cloak, and a blouse made of Scotch plaid with gold trimming about the neck. Two or three days afterwards, the percipient happened to be in a tram. As the tram arrived at the junction of the street Tourny and the square Gambetta, she perceived her friend, exactly as the vision had represented her.

Here is another and last example, still more significative than the preceding, for the vision was related to me eight days before the event took place, and I myself had related it to several persons before its realisation. A sensitive perceived in a crystal the following scene :— A large steamer, flying a flag of three horizontal bands, black, white, and red, and bearing the name *Leutschland*, navigating in mid-ocean ; the boat was surrounded by smoke ; a great number of sailors, passengers and men in uniform rushed to the upper-deck, and the sensitive saw the vessel founder.

Eight days afterwards, the newspapers announced the accident to the *Deutschland*, whose boiler had burst, obliging the boat to stand to. This vision is very curious, and as the details were given me before the accident, I will analyse it with care.

In the first place, one thing strikes us :—The premonition was not exactly fulfilled. The *Deutschland* met with an accident, it is true ; from the nature of that accident, it must have been surrounded with vapour; the crew and passengers would probably have rushed to the upper-deck; but happily, this magnificent vessel did not founder. On the other hand, the sensitive read L instead of D; but this detail is of no importance, the foreign word being probably badly deciphered. Lastly, one thing worthy of noting is the complete absence of personal interest in this vision, for the sensitive has no connection whatever with Germany, and was ignorant, at least consciously, of the existence of this boat, though he might certainly have seen illustrations of it. Evidently, we must not attach too much importance to this premonition, but the same sensitive has given me many other curious examples of the same kind; and these cases, compared with others I myself have observed, or with those of which I have received first-hand accounts, render the hypothesis of coincidence very improbable, but do not exclude it in an absolute manner. Such as they are, I think these facts are sufficiently interesting, for systematic observation of the visual phenomena I point out to be undertaken by competent persons, with true sensitives, and *not with hysterical subjects*, who seldom, if ever, give good observations.

The facts of premonition which I have observed or controlled, and of which I have just given a few examples, cannot, I think, be reasonably regarded as coincidences. I have already said that this hypothesis, without being inadmissible, is insufficient. Think of the immense proportion of probabilities, which accumulate in favour of the reality of a fact, as soon as the details themselves accumulate. The visions relative to the foreign friend, and to the wounded man, are instructive from this point of view, given the great number of circumstances seen beforehand:—exact locality, exact details of the wound, the costume, etc. It is a pity these facts were not observed under good conditions. That of the *Deutschland* is much less demonstrative, because of the inaccuracy in the foreseen issue.

If we compare these facts with those which have been already registered by the Society for Psychical Research, we will come to a conclusion, which confirms the simple impression that my own observations have given birth to in my mind. What is the cause of these premonitions? What signification have they with respect to the reality of time? Why do these visions come to people, who often have no interest whatever in knowing of them? These are all so many questions I am putting, without being able to indicate their solution. We must observe, with the greatest care, the facts which are presented, accumulate them in as great a number as possible, and, before considering their causes, be, first of all, doubly sure of their reality.

I have indicated, further back, the analogy of the greater part of these visions with dreams. I will point out finally another resemblance which is, perhaps, not the least interesting. This is, that these visions are often quickly forgotten. We must make the sensitives we observe write down their visions immediately; for, in the greater number of cases, a rapid amnesia mixes up the details and causes them to disappear. These visions, therefore, react upon the memory in the manner of dreams.

F. Certain visions are of a doubtful character. Here are some examples:—Several times a sensitive sees, in the crystal, a long procession of personages clothed in white enter a sort of crypt, which looks like the entrance to a tunnel. The vision presents no incoherence, but appears to have no signification, either as a souvenir evoked unconsciously or as a subconscious symbolical image admitting of interpretation.

And now, I am going to relate a vision, which, doubtless, will particularly interest occultists. I was operating with a sensitive, who was ignorant, I think, of their theories and those of spiritists ; who had no notion whatever about larvæ, and the forms given to such in the literature of occult sciences. Now the sensitive, of whom I speak, twice saw the vision of a tree standing out detached from the others in a forest. The earth appeared white, the tree itself was white, and appeared to be covered with white pears hanging from its branches. In his vision the sensitive drew near, and perceived that the pears were in reality white beasts of hideous appearance ; they were like heads without bodies, terminating in long tails. These beings were suspended to the branches by their tails. This vision seems to me to be purely imaginary, but I have related it because the curious forms described concord, I believe, with the aspect given to larvæ by occult writers. I cannot positively affirm the sensitive's absolute ignorance of mystic literature, but I have serious reasons to admit it. Must we simply see herein a morphological association between the different forms of larvæ, of tears embroidered on funereal garb and pears ! This explanation would be possible, if the sensitive knew the signification of the word larvæ, and the form lent to these fabulous beings.

I must now cut short the recital of these observations, and confine myself to resuming the conclusion to which I have come :—This is, that sensorial automatisms and especially visual hallucinations have the same characteristic features we note in dreams, the same weakening of the power of control of the will and judgment over the selection of images, over their coherence, their likelihood, and the same rapid amnesia. These are characteristic features, which we observe in every case, where the sentiment of personality is impaired. This is just as noticeable in purely imaginary hallucinations, as in hallucinations which appear to have a real foundation. This fact seems to me of great importance, for it permits us to think, that one of the conditions of the transcendental perception of facts past, present or even future is the disappearance of the voluntary and personal activity of the consciousness. Less fit to act actively, it would be more inclined to be passively impressed by influences, which are at present indeterminable ; the transmission to the normal consciousness of the impressions perceived by the impersonal consciousness appears to take place in the same way as in a dream, that is to say by dramatisation,—by a scene which expresses the idea in a concrete and symbolical manner.

There is therefore a *rapprochement* between these sensory automatisms and dreams and telepathy. Several premonitory dreams have been related to me by people of absolute good faith ; I will give two, which were told me by magistrates. The first concerns a man holding a high rank in the magistracy. He had sold, at an advantageous price, the wood on a property he possessed in the neighbouring country, but the bargain was not definitely settled, and was to be concluded in an interview arranged for between the owner and the purchaser. On the eve of the day when the magistrate should have gone to the country, his wife dreamt that she was present at the woodman's visit. In her dream, the latter offered a price, which was inferior to the price originally agreed upon, and covered his treachery with all sorts of periphrases, trying to prove that the bargain remained excellent for the owner. Finally he turned towards Madame X., who was present at the interview, and said to her, 'This is fair speaking, is it not, Madame?' Madame X. related the dream to her husband, telling him also that she thought the bargain would not come off. Her dream was fulfilled literally, and the phrase heard in her dream was uttered by the woodman. I received this account from the magistrate himself, an eminent man and one of the most brilliant intellects I have known.

The second dream is, perhaps, still more curious; it was told me by one of my colleagues, a calm, positive man with not the slightest tendency whatever to mysticism, employing his leisure hours in hunting rather than with metaphysics. He is, moreover, an experienced magistrate, and occupies a distinguished position at a court in the centre of France. At the time he had the dream I am going to relate, he was *juge d'instruction* in a small town, where there are some important factories. He was closely connected with a large manufacturer, and was accustomed to go and see him nearly every day. He knew the staff of the factory, and notably an overseer, a native of Flanders; this man, after many years of faithful service, wished to return to his birthplace and left his employer, remaining, however, on the best of terms with him.

Some months afterwards my colleague dreamt, he had taken his usual promenade and paid his visit to his friend. In his dream, he saw the overseer and manifested his surprise at seeing him ; the overseer replied, ‘ Yes, sir, it is I. I could not find any work in my own country, and i’ faith, I came back here.’ My colleague attached no importance to this dream ; on the morrow he went, as usual, to see his friend, and in the factory found the overseer whom he had seen in his dream. He exchanged the same conversation he had held with him in his dream.

Facts of this kind are very numerous. Perhaps they are only simple coincidences, but, as with sensory automatisms already described, I cannot help thinking, that coincidence does not explain everything. The concording details are often so numerous, that the probabilities in an extremely large proportion are against pure hazard. Richet, however, has carefully studied the Calculus of Probabilities, and I will not go into the question. I simply give my impression, persuaded as I am that those who study these facts impartially will come to the conclusion, that hazard does not explain everything.

The two dreams which I have taken as examples offer us cases of telepathy, that is to say, the impression perceived in a way which the ordinary senses do not explain. Telepathy has been carefully studied by Myers, Gurney, Podmore, Sidgwick, Ermacora, and discussion on this question can only be pursued, if the work of these savants has been studied. Telepathy appears to me to be established in a definitive manner, but I have no personal example to cite. However, a very great number of cases have been related to me, by persons who have received telepathic impressions. I know of many people who have had veridical hallucinations, either during sleep or when awake. The following are some examples borrowed from my circle of friends or relations :—

One of my great-uncles had married a coloured woman at Martinique. This lady, though highly respectable, was the victim of tenacious prejudice on the part of the white creole families on the island, and my uncle's marriage aroused the displeasure of his family. He left Saint-Pierre, and came to Bordeaux. His wife's mind suddenly gave way ; she had dangerous attacks of fury, but the union between my great-uncle and his wife was so close, and their reciprocal affection so profound, that my relation would not consent to a separation and have her cared for in an asylum. He fell a victim to his devotion ; his wife killed him in an attack of high fever. One of my great-aunts, the dead man's sister, living at Paris, was awakened in the middle of the night by her brother's voice calling her. This hallucination coincided with the death of my great-uncle.

An intimate friend of my mother's, a creole living at Bordeaux, had been present at the embarkation of a family belonging to Martinique, that was returning to Saint-Pierre. Some time afterwards she had a dream in which she saw a steamer founder ; the stern of the vessel rose above the waves, and she was able to read the name of the boat ; it was the one on which her friends had embarked. The vessel was lost and not a life saved.

Here is another interesting fact, in which (1) a sentiment of anxiety, the cause unknown to the conscious personality, corresponds with the serious illness of a near relation ; (2) the telepathic, premonitory hallucination of a telephonic call preceded the real call by two hours. This fact was communicated to me by one of my friends.

'Here is the exact account of the fact I mentioned to you.

'On the evening of the 17th October 1901 I went to bed feeling greatly disturbed ; I could not define the cause of my mental anguish, for I was in perfect health. This trouble persisted, and my sleep was haunted by painful nightmare.

'At half-past four I suddenly awoke, having distinctly heard the sound of my telephone bell. I ran to the apparatus, and answered the ring. The night operator replied that he had not rung me up, and that nothing unusual was happening. I had therefore been labouring under a hallucination, provoked by a particular haunting impression.

'At seven o'clock in the morning, the telephone again sounded, and I was put into communication with my brother-in-law residing at Biarritz. He told me that my sister, Madame V., had, in the night, been struck with congestion of the brain, and was in a critical state.'

All these facts may be considered as coincidences ; their attentive study, their thorough analysis, and their careful, thoughtful comparison can alone make us suspect, that hazard has nothing whatever to do with their production.

I may compare these cases of telepathy to facts of exteriorisation of sensibility, and of vision at a distance. I have given very little study to these facts, for they do not enter into the habitual plan of my researches ; I have sometimes observed them, but under conditions which do not satisfy me. My observations, however incomplete they may be, tend, nevertheless, to make me think, that the phenomenon described by de Rochas, under the name of *extériorisation de la sensibilité*, is real. I have met with two sensitives, who presented the phenomenon in a fairly clear manner in a waking state. I was led to make the following experiment with one of these sensitives. As soon as she entered the seance-room and had taken off her cloak, I took hold of the garment and pinched the lining. The sensitive mentioned feeling a certain sensation, rather feeble however, in the part of her body which had been covered by the garment in the place I had pinched it. The first time I tried this experiment, the sensitive had not been warned, and was surprised at the sensation she felt. Needless to say, I took precautions to make sure, this lady did not see what I was doing. I have observed, that this particular sensibility disappears very rapidly ; at the end of forty or fifty seconds it has ceased to exist.

I have asked a lady friend of this sensitive's to try the same experiment with her more private garments, especially with the corsets. Sensibility should then be greater.

I think that the observation of this fact, which I point out with much reserve, not having submitted it to serious study, is easier than is supposed, by employing the method I indicate, that is to say, by pinching or pricking garments which the sensitive has just thrown off.

I have had occasion also of verifying this phenomenon, under the technical conditions indicated by Colonel de Rochas. Very few sensitives present it in a marked manner, and it has seemed to me necessary to push the artificial sleep rather deeply. This expression may seem somewhat antiquated, to those who have frequented our learned neurological cliniques; but I cannot help thinking, that a real difference exists between the different phases of somnambulism, if they be observed. I speak of a difference of degree. It seems to me that, once the subject is put to sleep, the repeated action of the passes determines a particular state, pointed out by ancient magnetisers and exposed in detail by de Rochas, in which the subject appears to lose the notion of his personality, and be in close dependence upon his 'magnetiser.' I have experimented very little in this order of research, and I can permit myself only to give indications; I am unable to affirm a personal conviction. The few experiments I have made, however, tend to make me think that de Rochas is quite right in speaking of superficial and profound states. I am not convinced that the passage from the one to the other takes place with the regularity that my eminent friend has observed, but the fact pointed out by him is, I think, true in a general way. I am going to support my opinion with an example.

I have already spoken of Madame Agullana. Those who have only been present at her ordinary seances can have no idea of the curious faculties, she sometimes presents. An experienced manipulator can obtain with her—on condition of operating quietly and in the presence of very few people—phenomena which are very interesting, in the sphere of what is called animal magnetism. I was at her home one evening with Monsieur B. We were expecting a tutor, a medium of whom I had heard marvellous things. This tutor did not turn up; but, while waiting for him, I put Madame Agullana to sleep; I wished to show Monsieur B., who had no experience of this kind, the effects of profound sleep. I prolonged my passes, made longitudinally from the forehead to the epigastrium, for more than twenty-five minutes. From time to time, every seven or eight minutes, I asked Madame Agullana what was her name. She told me her name. At last the moment came when she could not remember her name, and appeared to have lost consciousness of her personality. I made a few more passes, and remarked to Monsieur B. that, when Madame A. appeared to have cutaneous anæsthesia, she seemed to perceive pricks at a distance of two or three centimetres from the skin. The passes were continued for about another quarter of an hour; at that moment Madame A. appeared to present two peculiarities :—

1. Her sensitiveness appeared to be localised behind her, at about three feet from, and twenty-one inches above the level of her head. She winced, when—care being taken that she did not see—the air was pinched at the spot indicated.

2. Only the persons *en rapport* with her—in the sense given to this word by de Rochas—could make an impression upon her ; contacts and pinching by other people were not perceived by her. I did not observe these two peculiarities under conditions sufficiently precise to warrant me affirming, that my observation was good ; but I indicate them, for to me they appeared probable.

Then, phenomena were forthcoming. Madame Agullana said she was in the street, outside of the house. I asked her to go and see what one of my friends, Monsieur Béchade, was doing—a man whom she knew well. It was twenty minutes past ten o'clock. To our great surprise, she told us that she saw 'Monsieur Béchade half-undressed, walking bare-footed on stones.' This did not seem to us to have any sense. I saw my friend the next day, and, although he is well acquainted with spiritistic phenomena, he seemed to be astonished at my recital, and said to me, word for word: 'I was not feeling very well yesterday evening; one of my friends who lives with me advised me to try Kneipp's method, and urged me so strongly, that, in order to satisfy him, I tried last night for the first time to walk barefooted on cold stone. I was, in reality, half-undressed when I made the first attempt; it was then twenty minutes past ten o'clock; I walked about for some time on the first steps of the staircase, which is built of stone.'

Perhaps this also is a coincidence, but this fact, which was witnessed by several people, presents very strange coincidences all the same. The hour, the costume, the unusual operation, are circumstances of too special a nature for mere hazard to suffice to explain them, it seems to me. I cite this case because it came under my personal observation, and because it shows a variety of telepathic phenomena; it is what the ancient magnetisers called lucidity, clairvoyance or, more exactly, vision at a distance. It appears to me to be a development of the facts pointed out by de Rochas; it looks as though the entire sensibility was exteriorised to variable distances. This is telæsthesia, a phenomenon in the sensitivo-sensorial domain, analogous to motor telekinesis.

Experimenters, who might be desirous of verifying these facts, should not forget, (1) it is necessary to have a sensitive who has often been *magnetised*—I do not say *hypnotised*; (2) sleep must be pushed very deeply—passes must be continued for more than half an hour after somnambulism sets in. The time is reduced with sensitives who are well developed.

It would be easy to multiply examples of this kind, particularly those of well-observed telepathic cases. The publications of the London Society for Psychical Research, Flammarion's book, *L'Inconnu et les problèmes psychiques*, the *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, contain a great number of them. This symbolism will always be met with,—this dramatic element, which I have indicated as the ordinary way by which the general consciousness transmits its information to the personal consciousness. The assimilation which I make between sensory automatisms and dreams, crystal vision and telepathy, appears to me to find support in these facts. These phenomena are of the same order and, in all probability, have their seat in the same strata of the consciousness.

I will not try to fathom the cause; once again I must repeat what I have so often said already,—the question is still so little known, that we are not able to enter profitably upon the study of the apparent cause of the psychical facts examined in this present chapter. We must multiply observations and verify the undeniable existence of the facts, before attempting to interpret them.

I give here, both as an example of careful observation and as an illustration of the chief features of the phenomena of which I have just been speaking, the following account which Professor Charles Richet has kindly sent me.

A COMPLEX CASE OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

BY PROFESSOR CHARLES RICHET.

April, 1903.

'Dear Dr. Maxwell,—The following is a brief account of the strange, bewildering facts, of which I promised you the narration.

'I. In the beginning of October 1900 I was at Carqueiranne, when I received a letter from Madame X. Madame X. had left Paris on the 1st of October for Fontainebleau, with the intention of spending a month near the forest. In her letter to me she related, that on the arrival of the train at the station of Melun, she had a notion that some one entered her carriage and sat down opposite to her. This "vision" spoke to her, saying he had known me very well, that he used to call me "Carlos," and that I called him "Tony"; he told her, that he knew Fontainebleau very well and would accompany her in her walks in the forest.

'After that letter I received others from Madame X., giving me numerous details concerning this vision which called itself "Tony," a vision which was repeated several times during Madame X.'s visit at Fontainebleau. These details were particularly remarkable and abundant between the 20th and the 28th October. I will briefly enumerate them, after which I will enter upon a discussion and appreciation of the chief details.

'"Tony" showed me a tree to-day on which were engraved the letters A. B. and a date 1880, or 1883—the last figure was indistinct; underneath the letters A. B. was the name "Lucie." . . . "Tony" seems to have had to do with machinery of some kind. He had hoped to construct a machine, which would have been of great use to mankind. He seems to say it was he who discovered the telephone,—or, at least, that he was on the right track. . . . I hear him say, "I know Madeleine well." He says he adored his father. He speaks about Léon, Sarah, and Marguerite, but especially about Lucie. His wife's name was Lucie. . . . There were Jews in his family; he also talks about Louise. . . . He worked with telegraphy and electric wires. . . . He knew you remarkably well; he called you "Carlos," and you called him "Tony"; of this I am sure, for he speaks of it so often. He says he collaborated with you in some work. He says that when he was dead, you went into his death-chamber and kissed him on the forehead. . . . He had not been previously ill,—a feeling of suffocation in the chest and that was all. [*Quelque chose l'a étouffé à la poitrine, et ce fut tout.*] He was only 30 or 32 years old when he died. . . . I do not think he was married, that is to say, in the legal sense of the word; but he was very much attached to Lucie, by whom he had a daughter, who was about three years old when he died. This child seems to be still alive, but very few people know about it. He adored Lucie, who seems to have been very charming, for Antoine shows me her portrait,—a medallion or locket which he used to wear—in which she seems to have beautiful dark eyes and hair. He lived for about four or five years with Lucie; but Lucie had previously been married to a Jew [*un gros juif*], whom she did not care for. I think Antoine lived a long time with Lucie at Fontainebleau; they were sadly happy there [*tristement heureux*]. The house they stayed at is no longer inhabited. It was a red and white cottage, quite close to the forest, which was just behind it. . . . The house stood alone ; a tramway passes by there to-day. . . . " Tony " also speaks about his father. His father loved his own fireside ; he once lost a lot of money when Antoine was grown up ; but Antoine did not take much notice of this, for he did not trouble himself about money matters. The house in which " Tony " and his father lived together, is one which they seem to have always inhabited. " Tony " seems to have always known this house. The furniture is old ; the rooms look as though they had been occupied for a very long time. He speaks of the Faubourg Montmartre ; does that mean he used to live there ? . . . Antoine also had to do with engines of war. I think he was wounded during the war [the Commune], because I hear the noise of cannon—and your father dressed his wound. . . .

'Antoine was a free-mason. He admired Claude Bernard. His political opinions were of a socialistic tendency. He did not care for the society of women. He was temperate, and did not drink wine ; he was no epicure. . . . He has been to Geneva. . . . He has hunted with you. . . . He used to like reading *Titus Livy*. . . . He cared naught for the world's opinion, taking his conscience for his sole guide. . . . He often saw Philippe. He also mentions Yvonne, Josephine, Georges, James, Clotilde, and André. . . . He speaks about a pseudonym ; he has written some things under a *nom-de-plume*. . . . Antoine had beautiful dark eyes, large and most expressive, full of resolution, but, at the same time, soft, dreamy-looking eyes. He had a frank, hearty laugh, and this merry sound was often heard [*Il riait souvent de ce bon rire*]. He had a habit of putting his hands behind his head, and stretching himself out on a sofa, laughing merrily. . . . He has very long, thin fingers, which seem to be clever at mechanical work; indeed he seems to have been clever at everything, and to do all things well. . . . A short time before he died—a Wednesday,—you and he were at a banquet together, and drank each other's health. "Tony" then told you, that he had not been feeling well, and that he was in great need of a holiday. . . . Antoine told me again to-day, that he loved Lucie dearly; "and," he said, "I still watch over her, even now; tell her no evil will ever befall her." [*Rien de mauvais ne lui arrivera.*]

'II. The preceding are the most important of the data concerning my friend Antoine B., given me in Madame X.'s letters during the month of October 1900. I repeat Madame X. was at Fontainebleau, and I at Carqueiranne. Therefore, I could not have given her any hints by my words, and I am particularly anxious to point out a fact, of which I am absolutely certain, which is, that I had never pronounced the name of my friend Antoine B. in the presence of Madame X.; I am positive that no word of mine could have afforded the smallest clue to Madame X. of my acquaintance with Antoine B.

'I may also add that, though to-day four years after these visions occurred, Madame X. has become one of my friends, at that moment, October 1900, our acquaintanceship dated from a few months only; and, at Madame X.'s own request, in order to avoid hints and suggestions, I abstained from ever speaking with her on anything save vague, general topics. Madame X., at this time, lived a secluded, retired life in a convent, seldom going out and receiving no visitors. She was, moreover, almost an entire stranger to Paris, having arrived there only a short time before I made her acquaintance. If Madame X. spoke of any one of my deceased friends to-day, it would be impossible for me to affirm positively that I had never pronounced that name in her presence; but, thanks to the great care I took at that moment to avoid all manner of confidences whatsoever, continually seconded in my efforts by Madame X. herself, I can certify that the name of Antoine B. had not been pronounced up to the month of October 1900.

'Therefore my stupefaction was indeed great, when I discovered in Madame X.'s letters so many precise and correct data, though mixed up with occasional errors. And when I speak of precise and correct data, I do not mean data, traces of which may have been left in printed matter. I speak of private, unpublished facts, facts known only to me or to his wife. Notwithstanding this, however, I was blind to the truth. And I sought to explain away these phenomena of lucidity, by an apparently rational explanation.

'Here is the fable I invented, for I think it may be useful to acquaint the reader with my hesitations, and the manner in which I tried to explain these facts. First of all, I supposed that Fontainebleau was a mistake, since, as far as I knew, Antoine B. did not go to Fontainebleau in 1883. At the same time, I thought I remembered he had been a pupil at the School of Artillery at Fontainebleau in 1874. But, I asked myself, why should Madame X. speak about Antoine B., whose name I was and am certain never to have pronounced in her presence? I found, or rather I thought I had found, the explanation. In the month of September 1900, Antoine B.'s daughter

Madeleine, the wife of Jacques S., died, and one or two newspapers mentioned this sad and premature death. Now, I supposed that Madame X. had unconsciously glanced over one of these newspapers, that Antoine B.'s name had appeared therein with his biography more or less fully traced, our relations mentioned [he had been director with me of the *Revue Scientifique*,] and reference made to his term at the School of Application at Fontainebleau. That was my fable.

'It is true there were several other facts awaiting explanation; but I did not let them hinder me,—so dazed are we by the fear of meeting with the truth just where it really is, when we find ourselves in the presence of facts, with which force of habit has not yet rendered us familiar.

'I will not dwell upon the absurdity of this manner of thinking; I will simply repeat, that my first thought was that this vision of Antoine was simply the souvenir of some sub-conscious reading, with here and there a few gleams of lucidity, already very important in themselves, but not exceeding in precision or in importance other proofs of lucidity, of which Madame X. had already given me numerous and decisive examples.

'Well! I was altogether wrong! It was a conversation which I had with Antoine B.'s widow, [she was now Madame L., having married a second time] which showed me my mistake.

'During the summer vacation in 1901, she was staying at my house at Carqueiranne, and one day I happened to speak about Madame X.'s visions concerning Antoine. As soon as I began, Madame B. became agitated; the recital wrought upon her feelings considerably. When I had finished, she furnished me with the two following fundamental facts, facts which entirely destroyed the point of view I had first of all adopted: 1. "Antoine was never a pupil at the School of Application at Fontainebleau"; 2. "In 1883 he and I were at Fontainebleau together."

'Consequently the scaffolding I had erected in order to explain Madame X.'s visions entirely collapsed. The connection between Antoine and Fontainebleau—connection discovered by Madame X.—could not have been provoked by the souvenir of the reading of any newspaper, and the hypothesis—a very improbable one moreover—of a sub-conscious souvenir, of the unconscious reading of a hypothetical newspaper, had therefore no *raison d'être*. So that the knowledge of a connection between Antoine and Fontainebleau could not have been due to any printed matter—since, naturally, no newspaper had mentioned this private detail in Antoine's life—or to any suggestion I might have given inadvertently—since I was ignorant of the fact.

'Three other hypotheses remain:—that of chance, and this is so absurd, that it is useless even to mention it; that of collusion between Madame X. and Madame B., a hypothesis which is as absurd as the preceding one, even if it were possible, for neither of these two ladies had or have ever seen one another; lastly, there is the hypothesis of an extraordinary lucidity, on the nature of which I will not dwell, in order to avoid theorising, but which I must, perforce, be content with simply pointing out.

'There is not the slightest trace left of Antoine B.'s visit to Fontainebleau in 1883. At Barbizon, where he stayed with his wife from the 15th May to 20th June 1883, he lived in a rustic inn, which has been demolished to make way for a tram-line. No writing, no letter, no souvenir of any kind whatever could have furnished a clue to this private detail in Antoine B.'s life.

'III. I will now confront the reality, such as it was in June 1883, with what Madame X. wrote me in October 1900.

'1. In order to go to Fontainebleau, or rather to Barbizon, M. and Mme. B. left the train at *Melun.* It is impossible to say, whether the initials of A. B. and the name of Lucie are engraved on a tree in the forest.

'2. "There is much resemblance between Antoine, as he was, and the physical portrait drawn of him by Madame X., especially the soft, caressing expression of the eyes. In politics he held advanced opinions for his time, and, had he lived, he would, in all probability, have been a socialist to-day; at least his opinions would have been very favourable to socialistic doctrines. The sentence, *Nous étions tristement heureux*, is characteristically true; for at Barbizon, in spite of our long walks and our reveries in the forest, he was already very weak and in the grip of the illness which, soon afterwards, carried him off so rapidly." [The above was written and handed to me by Madame B. in October 1901.]

'3. Lucie is not Madame B.'s name. Her name is Marie. But Antoine often said to her, "What a pity you are not called Lucie!" It was his favourite name.

'4. It is quite true that, alone among all my friends, Antoine called me "Carlos," and that I, on my side, called him "Tony." This is a fact known only to me. It is also perfectly correct—and I am not aware of having related this fact to any person whomsoever—that, when Antoine died, stricken to death in a few hours by a disease of the heart, I went into his death-chamber and kissed him on the brow.

'5. All the details relative to the construction of machines, electric wires, invention of the telephone, [before Gr. Bell's invention had been made known], collaboration with me in a scientific work, all these details are correct.

'6. The house in which he stayed at Fontainebleau stood by itself, with its back to the forest; a tramway passes there to-day, the house having been pulled down to make room for it.

'7. His daughter (who died in September 1900, at about the time when Madame X. says she first heard a voice call me "Carlos") was called Madeleine. His sister's name was Louise. Louise married M. H. of Jewish origin. [*There are Jews in his family.*]

'8. He was thirty-two years old when he died, and his death was almost instantaneous. It would be impossible to describe his death more correctly than Madame X. does in the words: *Quelque chose l'a étouffé à la poitrine, et ce fut tout.* In fact, towards eleven o'clock in the night he was seized by a thoracic oppression, which made such rapid progress, that he expired at four o'clock in the early morning.

'9. He was not wounded during the Commune; but once when, as a reserve artillery officer, he was assisting at gun-firing at Grenoble he lost the hearing of the left ear, an affliction which saddened him very much. Probably I knew this, but, if so, I had completely forgotten it. It was Madame B., who related this detail to me in

October 1901, a detail absolutely unknown to every one, for Antoine never spoke of it.

'10. When Antoine was already grown up, shortly before his marriage, his father, Louis, suffered heavy losses of money through a defaulting cashier. Antoine did not take this to heart; moreover, no one ever knew of the incident, which was carefully kept from the knowledge of every one outside of the family.

'11. He wrote under a pseudonym. He wrote a few insignificant plays in 1876 or 1877; but it would be almost impossible to recover traces of them to-day.

'12. The house where he was born, and where he lived up to the time of his marriage, is very old (situated on the Quai de H., and not in the Faubourg Montmartre); the furniture is ancient; the house is quite unlike a modern one.

'13. The description of Lucie, his wife, is exact—"a very charming woman with beautiful dark hair and eyes." Antoine had a portrait of her in a locket, which he used to wear on his person.

'14. In a conversation I had with him a short time before his death, he spoke to me about the extreme fatigue which he felt, a kind of general lassitude, and of his great need of change and rest.

'In all the above facts there is an admirable and most unlikely concordance between the reality and the indications given by Madame X.

'To be quite complete, I ought to mention the facts which I have not been able to verify, and those which seem inexact to me.

'Among the facts I have been unable to verify, are the names of Yvonne, Josephine, Sarah, Marguerite, Georges, Clotilde.

'The chief inexact details are the story of Lucie's true husband—a Jew (*un gros juif*)—and of the child Lucie and Antoine had, of whose existence hardly any one knew; also the detail of having been wounded during the Commune and his wound having been dressed by my father. I ought also to add that Antoine and Marie B. were at Fontainebleau with their three children. However, for reasons which I will develop further on, these errors have a great interest and merit an attentive examination.

'When considering these phenomena we must, first of all, rid ourselves of commonplace prejudices. The question is, not whether such or such a phenomenon does or does not concord with recognised ideas, but whether the phenomenon exists or does not exist—always supposing, of course, that it be not in flagrant contradiction with established and verified truths.

'Therefore every effort of demonstration must be concentrated on this one point: Can we explain the above facts by any known process? For the sake of simplicity let us only take one of the facts, that of the presence—"or of the *thought*"—of Antoine B. at the Melun railway station. We have seen that I fell into error by endeavouring to explain this presence—or this *thought*—by a term at the School of Artillery at Fontainebleau; and I do not see what other explanation can be attempted, since not the slightest trace is left of Antoine's visit to Fontainebleau with his wife twenty years ago.

'Even if an expensive detective inquiry had been set on foot, it is highly doubtful if anything concerning Monsieur and Madame B.'s visit to Fontainebleau could have been found out.

'Therefore, at the very outset, and without taking into account any of the other exact details in Madame X.'s visions, we encounter the material impossibility of establishing any relations between Fontainebleau and Antoine.

'But, just for one moment, let us make the concession that the names of Monsieur and Madame B. had been somewhere met with at Barbizon after an interval of twenty years; this would immediately entail the knowledge of many other details ever so much easier to gather than were those very details given by Madame X., and not only easier but also more exact. Had this visit become known to Madame X. by any normal means, there would not have been the story of an illegal union, and of a residence of five years at Fontainebleau.[1] So even the mistakes are a confirmation of the truth, one of the most interesting of confirmations; for, honestly, we cannot suppose that, knowing the real facts, Madame X. would have taken it into her head to add facts, which she knew to be incorrect.

'To put it in another way, even if we admit this absurdity of an extremely cleverly conducted detective inquiry making known to Madame X. the story of Antoine's life, she would not have distorted the results of such an inquiry by introducing errors therein. To take an example, when Antoine was at Fontainebleau with his wife and three children, she would have mentioned the other two children. She would also have said—and this was extremely easy to find out—

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[1] Let us, however, point out that Antoine had been five years married when he died, and that he had been at Fontainebleau with his wife, consequently the error, which consists in saying five years of life together at Fontainebleau, constitutes only a relative error.

that the B. establishment was situated on the Quai de H., and not in the Faubourg Montmartre.

'Therefore, every point carefully considered, I think it is absolutely certain that normal means of knowledge could not establish any connection between Antoine and Fontainebleau.

'In the second place, unpublished details were furnished. I will pass over all the details—though they too be correct—which might be found in biographical or necrological articles; I will simply draw attention to the following five extremely private details:—

'1. The name of Lucie; and a locket containing her portrait which Antoine always wore on his person.
'2. The names of "Carlos" and "Tony."
'3. A pseudonym.
'4. Money lost by his father.
'5. The circumstances of his death.

'Now, not one of these details could have been found out by any inquiry, however clever, however well-planned and well carried out such an inquiry might have been.

'1. Madame B. was the *only* living person who knew of Antoine's preference for the name of Lucie. She had never spoken of this to any one; and it is a minute detail of which I was in complete ignorance, until Madame B. told me of it in 1901, after hearing about the visions Madame X. had related to me in her letters, a year before.

'2. I was the *only* person living who knew that Antoine called me "Carlos"; and this is not a very commonplace statement, since no one, save Antoine, has ever called me "Carlos."

'3. No one ever suspected Antoine of having written under a *nom de plume*; the few insignificant things he wrote for the stage are so entirely forgotten, that Madame B. herself remembered nothing about them in 1901; and it is even highly probable that what he wrote could not be found again, the Bobino theatre, where he presented his plays, having disappeared years ago.

'4. The monetary losses which his father, Louis B., sustained a short while before Antoine's marriage, had been carefully kept from the knowledge of every one. These losses were occasioned by a dishonest cashier. The man was not prosecuted. Notwithstanding the importance of the sum involved, Antoine was relatively indifferent to the loss, as was distinctly indicated by Madame X.

'5. The circumstances of his death are described with striking reality. I kissed Antoine on the forehead when he was dead. Some little time before the end, he spoke to me about his health, saying he felt in great need of rest. He did not look ill, however, and he died, after a few hours' illness only, from a cardiac affection: *quelque chose l'a étouffé à la poitrine*.

'There is still another item of interest, which I wish to touch upon: this is, the "message" from Antoine to his wife: *rien de mauvais ne lui arrivera*. These words were written by Madame X. in one of her letters to me, with the indication that Antoine had pronounced them on a certain day. Now, on that very day, Madame B. was delivered of a still-born child. She was, therefore, in a perilous condition at the very time

Antoine said: "I watch over her, even now; tell her, no evil will ever befall her."

'We have, now, to draw our conclusion. The hypothesis of chance is absurd; the hypothesis of fraud is absurd; there remains but a third hypothesis, that of a phenomenon inexplicable by any of the existing data of our knowledge. It is for this inexplicable phenomenon, that we are going to try and find an explanation.

'Two explanations at once present themselves: α, either this knowledge is entirely due to the intellectual faculties of Madame X.; or β, some other intelligence intervenes, which manifests itself to Madame X.

'α. This hypothesis is rather complicated, for it is not in the form of abstract knowledge that Madame X. learnt of all these real facts concerning Antoine, but in the form of Antoine himself. So that, if it really be only a question of abstract notions, these abstract notions have taken a concrete form in order to manifest themselves. They would thus have constituted a sort of error in themselves. It has been supposed that Antoine himself came into the railway carriage at Melun, that he accompanied Madame X. in her walks in the forest at Fontainebleau during the whole month of October 1900, that he related the story of his life to her; and there is something which shocks us in the thought that, though the story told to Madame X. be true, there was no Antoine. At the same time, this objection is not paramount; for we know so little of the ways in which supernormal knowledge flows into the mind, that we are unable to make any negation concerning them.

'Moreover, it is, relatively, more rational, not to suppose the intervention of another force, since, *à la rigueur*, a human intelligence, under extraordinary conditions of clairvoyance, may suffice to explain everything.

'β. If other personalities intervene, they may be either β', the personality of Antoine B. himself, or, β'', other forces non-identical with human personalities.

'β'. Assuredly, the hypothesis that it is the consciousness of Antoine B. himself who came to Madame X. is the simplest, and at a first glance, it satisfies us. But then! what a number of objections such a hypothesis raises! How is it possible for the consciousness to survive after death? How can intelligences which suffer birth escape death? A beginning implies an end: Birth implies death, the one involves the other!

'β''. Other forces such as genii, demons, angels, etc., may exist, as strict logic commands us to admit. There is a certain impertinence in supposing that, in the Infinite Immensity of Worlds and Forces, man is the only force capable of thinking. It seems to me necessary to admit, that there exist intelligent forces in nature, other than man; forces, which are constituted differently to him, and are consequently imperceptible to his normal senses; these forces may be called angels, genii, demons, spirits, no matter the name we give them. It is evident, however, that this hypothesis of intelligent forces ought not to be confounded with the hypothesis of human personalities surviving after death. These are two absolutely distinct hypotheses. Now, I think that it is not the hypothesis of intelligent forces which is doubtful; what is extremely doubtful is that these forces can enter into communication with man. Moreover, as in the case under notice, why should they take the material appearance of a deceased human being, and declare their identity with such?

'We see that all the explanations so far put forth are imperfect, and, for my part, I find them so imperfect, that I am inclined to believe in some other hypothesis which I do not know, which I cannot even guess, but which, nevertheless, I am convinced exists, since here we have real facts, which not any of the hypotheses heretofore presented can explain in a satisfactory manner. It is to this hypothesis *X* that I attach myself, for the present, recognising, while doing so, that there is a certain amount of irony in proposing a hypothesis, of which I am unable to give the formula.

'In conclusion, we see that this case of Antoine B. involves the whole problem of spiritism. It appeared to interest you, my friend, and I have, therefore, related it to you, because the simple and complete narration of facts ought to precede theories.'

November 1903.

'MY DEAR MAXWELL,—The series of phenomena concerning Antoine B. do not cease with the recital I recently sent you. That recital comports an epilogue not less extraordinary than itself. I say an "epilogue," for most assuredly it has some connection—of a psychological order—with the preceding recital. I will set it forth as concisely as possible:

'One evening in May 1903 I was dining with Madame X. and her family. After dinner we tried for phenomena, but received nothing. Towards the close of the evening, shortly before I left, Madame X. pronounced the following words—words which I wrote down among my notes as soon as I reached home—" I see a woman standing near me; she has grey hair, she is about fifty years of age, but looks older than she really is. Her hair is quite grey. I believe it is Madame B." (Antoine's widow), " though I am not quite sure yet. I see the figure 7 with her, which probably means that she will die in seven months, or on the 7th of some near month." Such is the copy of the very brief note I took of Madame X.'s words. I ought to add that this note is a much abridged account of Madame X.'s actual words, and that she also said :—" Madame B. is very ill; she has some sort of chest complaint—perhaps tuberculosis—and she will die very soon indeed."

'What renders this premonition extremely interesting is that Madame B., at that moment, was only very slightly ill. She was so slightly indisposed, that not for a moment did the thought ever cross my mind, that her indisposition might turn into anything serious. Neither I nor any one in the world suspected any danger whatsoever. But fifteen days after this prognostication had been made, the apparently slight bronchial affection from which Madame B. was suffering, and of which I had, naturally, never said a word to Madame X., remained stationary, but still the idea that the result might prove fatal never entered into any one's head.

'Nevertheless, the result did prove fatal. Madame B. died, within seven weeks after Madame X.'s prediction, on Tuesday, 30th June 1903, after a very sudden and irresistible aggravation of her previously slight indisposition, which carried her off in four or five days. The illness turned out to be a sort of pulmonary affection, the nature of which is still unknown to the doctors who attended her: (tuberculosis? infectious *grippe*?).

'An interesting detail: Madame B. had black hair; I, who knew her well, had never noticed any grey in her hair; I did not know she was grey. Now a few days before her illness took a serious turn, one of the members of my family who had just been paying Madame B. a visit, said to me: "Madame B. does not dye her hair any longer, so that one can now see how very grey she is!"

'Here is a veritable premonition. The authenticity of this remarkable fact cannot be doubted, for it would have been impossible for me, or for any one else, by means of telepathy, or in any other way, to convey to Madame X. the idea of a death, in which I did not believe, and which did not, even for a moment, cross my mind, or any one else's mind.

'Such, dear Dr. Maxwell, is the epilogue of the recital I sent you. Although we cannot state precisely the link uniting the diverse psychical phenomena exposed in my two letters, I do not think we can consider them as independent of each other. There are certain mysterious relations here, which the future, aided by our patience, will certainly elucidate.—Yours sincerely,

'CHARLES RICHET.'

January 1905.

'DEAR FRIEND,—During the revision of the above pages, whilst I was showing them to Madame X., the latter told me that "the family B. were not yet done with" [*tout n'est pas fini encore pour la famille B.!*]; her words conveyed to me the impression of a presentiment of some misfortune about to fall upon that family. These words were uttered between 3 and 4 o'clock on the 23rd December 1904.

'Now, during the night of the 23rd-24th December, towards 11 o'clock, Louis B. (the son of Antoine B.) narrowly escaped being killed in a serious railway accident. That he was saved was little short of a miracle. When, on the morning of the 24th December, I saw by the newspapers that Louis had escaped, I was struck by the thought that Madame X.'s prediction [*tout n'est pas fini encore pour la famille B.*] had been on the point of becoming realised.

'Alas! the presentiment was but too true; for Oliver L., the son of Madame B.'s second husband, was in the same train as Louis B., and, though the morning papers did not mention the fact, he was killed instantaneously.

. . . .

'I have another interesting point to mention in connection with this presentiment. On the 8th July 1903 Madame X. wrote to me saying, that Madame B.'s death (she had just died) would be soon followed by another. She added: 'Some one tells me that one of the sons will soon die,—before the end of two years. I think it is Jacques B., but they do not say so.' [*Quelqu'un me dit qu'un des fils mourra bientôt, avant deux ans. Je pense que c'est Jacques B., mais on ne le dit pas.*]

'Thus this premonition—somewhat vague it is true—pronounced eighteen months before, was realised. It will be remarked that Madame X., by adding her own impression to her auditory perception, committed an error; whilst the perception itself, though not very explicit, was correct.—Yours very sincerely,

'CHARLES RICHET.'

II. MOTOR AUTOMATISM

The observations which I have just laid before my readers, relate to facts occurring in the domain of sensibility ; the motor centres do not escape automatism, and there is a whole series of motor automatisms, simple or mixed, to be noticed. For the sake of clearness, I will divide them into four classes :—

1. Simple muscular automatism :—Typtology ; Planchette ; and diverse alphabetic systems, ouija, etc.
2. Graphic muscular automatism :—Automatic script and drawing ; Planchettes, baskets, tables.
3. Phonetic automatism :—Automatic discourses.
4. Mixed automatisms :—Incarnations.

I will remark, first of all, that the word automatism, borrowed from Myer's terminology, is not strictly correct. In reality, we can only speak of automatism when we are in presence of mechanical acts, excluding intervention of the will. Now this is not the case with the acts in question ; these acts, which appear to be automatic if they are looked at solely from the point of view of the personal consciousness, are in reality due to some sort of consciousness, parasitic or non-parasitic, and offer the characteristic features of voluntary acts. These reserves made, I will continue, for want of better, to use the word consecrated by custom.

1. Simple muscular automatism.—I designate thus those acts which require no association of complicated movements, such as the movements of writing and language exact. The simplest way of provoking this automatism is in the ordinary spiritistic process of typtology.

The experimenters sit down round a table, and lay their hands lightly on it. Sooner or later the table trembles, sways about from side to side, sometimes turns round, but more often raises one of its feet and strikes the ground with it. A code of signals is arranged to express 'yes,' 'no,' 'doubtful'—*e.g.* three, two, and four :—the manner in which the alphabet is to be pointed out is also agreed upon, either the table will strike the number of the letter's rank, for example, one for A, three for C, 15 for O, 20 for T, etc., or it will strike the floor when the letter desired is pronounced.

I rank this phenomenon with automatisms because, nearly always, it has appeared to me to be due to involuntary or unconscious movements. I do not like this kind of experiment; it does not carry conviction. Gasparian, and after him, Chevreul have given the correct interpretation of it.

It is interesting only when the communications obtained reveal facts, apparently unknown to the experimenters. Then the phenomenon is no longer explicable by simple automatic action: the muscular movement is determined by the impersonal consciousness of the sitters or the medium, and becomes the manner of transmitting the message addressed by the impersonal consciousness to the personal consciousness. In fact, we conceive that, if what I said concerning parakinesis be correct, the movements of the table may be sometimes parakinetic. I have been present at many seances for typtology, but I have never verified interesting facts, except the one I related concerning *Touton la Pipe.* When the experiments are conducted under the conditions which I consider indispensable, I am careful not to encourage typtological manifestations.

There exists other means of inducing simple muscular automatism. The best are instruments after the style of the psychograph. The alphabet, numbers, and the words 'yes,' 'no,' 'I do not know,' are written on a dial in the centre of which a needle is placed. The displacements of this index hand indicate the letters, numbers, etc., like the needle of the dial of a Bréguet telegraph. These dials are made of different sizes, and of different materials. It is best, however, to construct them in the following manner:—take a square piece of white wood, non-resinous, from seventeen to twenty inches broad. Trace thereon a circumference of seven to nine inches in diameter, and write around it the letters of the alphabet, numbers, the words, 'yes,' 'no,' 'I do not know,' and any other desired indications. Place in the centre of the circle a bone or ivory pivot, the axis round which the needle will turn. Make the needle of wood, giving it enough thickness and solidity for the hands to be able to rest on it. It is not necessary to give much mobility to the needle if the hands are to rest on it; in this case, it will suffice to pierce a hole in it, through which the pivot may pass.[1]

I have been told of cases where the needle moved of its own accord; but I have not personally verified this fact. If movements of the needle without contact be desired, it would be well to give a more perfect suspension to the needle: this may be accomplished by supporting it on small movable rollers, like those on the planchettes used for automatic writing.

I have rarely experimented with psychographs, for the same reasons which made me shun typtology.

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[1] Articles of this nature may be found at Leymarie's, 42 Rue Saint-Jacques, Paris; and at the office of *Light*, 110 St. Martin's Lane, London.

I will say the same thing of another kind of apparatus: the ouija, made in England. It is a board on which the alphabet and other signs are written. A small movable planchette supported on three or four feet is placed on the board; the sitters put their hands on the planchette which points out the letters, etc., with one of its feet, a process which is irksome, to say the least of it.

There are yet other means for inducing muscular automatism. I will point out, as an example, the very ancient method of divination by the ring. A metal, or better still an ivory ring, is suspended to a hair or silken thread. The end of the hair or thread is held in the fingers; the ring is held, thus suspended, in the centre of a small circle of three or four inches in diameter on which the alphabet is written.

At the end of a certain time, the ring sways about, then strikes the letters, sometimes spelling out words. By placing the ring in a glass, it will strike against it, giving indications in this way. I have only used this method once or twice, for it seemed to me to present very little interest. This is in reality Chevreul's exploring pendulum.

2. Automatic script.—Automatic writing is, I think, one of the most interesting of all phenomena; I have no need to bring to mind the important studies which Myers, Hodgson, Hyslop, Sidgwick, and others have made on this phenomena. I have been able to make some observations of great interest, but the limits of this book do not permit me to give a detailed report of them. The thorough examination I made of one particular case of automatic writing—a rather rudimentary

case, it is true—clearly revealed to me the play of the unconscious souvenirs of the medium.

The methods for obtaining automatic writing are numerous. We can even make a table write by fixing a pencil to one of its feet; the same with a hat or basket, etc. More perfect methods exist, of which the following are the best:—

First of all the planchette; an instrument in the shape of an oval piece of wood, resting on three movable tiny ivory rollers, with a small copper setting at one end, in which a lead-pencil may be screwed. With the planchette two or three persons may write at the same time.

Another equally good method is the following: Fix two, three or four handles on to a large wooden ball, of about seven inches in diameter. Fix the pencil in a hole bored through the ball, each handle of which is held by an experimenter. Place a sheet of paper underneath the pencil, the latter will then often move and write words and phrases.

Finally, the best method of all is to write naturally, without any instrument at all. The sensitive sits down with a pencil, as though to write, and waits.

Whatever the method adopted may be, it is seldom that automatic writing is manifested at the outset. Generally one or several seances are passed in illegible scribblings, in making strokes, zigzags, in endless repetitions of the same letter. But we must not be discouraged; on the contrary, we must continue experimenting for a certain time, before concluding to the impossibility of success. Whether we be trying to obtain collective or ordinary automatic writing, it is a good plan to consecrate ten or fifteen minutes every day, always at the same hour, to these trials. The phenomenon takes a long time to evolve, and people, who have obtained most curious results with automatic writing, have passed months in developing their faculty.

As I said before, I have chiefly directed my experiments towards the observation of movements without contact; therefore, I have not sought very assiduously to obtain automatic writing with my mediums. The greater number of cases I have observed offer little interest, if we compare them to the curious visual hallucinations which I related a little while ago. I will make an exception though for one which I am in the act of studying, and which makes me conceive some hopes, the sensitive having written in English, a language which I am positive he does not know. This medium, like many I have met with, submits grudgingly to these experiments, and has not yet consented to sit regularly for automatic writing. I hope I may succeed in persuading him to do so.

Though my observations present very little relative interest, I will give some examples of the results I have obtained personally. I will give them simply as indications, for, none of the facts I have observed present, so far, any real interest, except the one I was able to analyse, and even this contains nothing of a transcendental nature.

I myself have often tried to write with the planchette. I obtained words and incoherent phrases, all extremely commonplace. I wrote alone or with others; alone, I obtained it with the left as well as with the right hand. The left hand sometimes gives mirror-writing, *Spiegelschrift*; with the planchette, the left hand generally writes in the usual manner from left to right. One point to be noted with planchette-writing, is the dissociation of the graphic elements. The letters are as a rule fairly large, varying from an eighth of an inch to nearly an inch. It is chiefly in capital letters we find the dissociation curious. The characteristics of my hand-writing are not altered. I will add that this manifestation does not present much interest, for I am perfectly conscious of what I write when alone, and when I write with another person, the movements of the planchette indicate to me what letters are being formed.

With the ball and handles, of which I gave a description, I once observed a curious fact. I was experimenting with a lady and her husband; the former is a medium whose faculties are above the average. The writing announced the reception of a letter from Hendaye on the morrow. The letter came; but to demonstrate the premonitory feature of this fact, I have only the affirmation of my co-experimenters, and although they are people of unimpeachable probity, their affirmation alone would be insufficient to establish the reality of the premonition in a positive manner. Therefore, I only give it as a specimen of the facts which may be obtained with automatic writing.

I have often observed ordinary writing, but I have never obtained a veridic paranormal fact in this way. I have, as I said, studied a case of semi-automatic writing, and was able to analyse its psychological features thoroughly. The writer was what spiritualists call an *intuitive* medium, that is to say, he was conscious of what he wrote. He was thirty-five years of age, and had never indulged in spiritistic practices before, though he knew the literature, especially Allan Kardac's works. At the time the phenomenon manifested itself with him, he was mentally overdone through excess of brain work. He occupied an important official position. Apparently he has no nervous defect, and, except for frequent headaches, his health is good. I have not been able to study his reflex movements, nor examine him from a somatic point of view.

He commenced writing with the planchette; he had a sensation of being guided, but knew what he wrote and what he was going to write. There was, therefore, a beginning of dissociation between the mental images, properly so called, and their motor action. This fact should be noted, because it seems to me to have an interesting signification, in so far as it demonstrates that the ideomotor image is not simple, but has complex elements, and, notably, that elements which are purely ideal and motor elements can become dissociated. In the example cited, the sensitive was fully conscious of the *ideas* which were formed in, or which presented themselves to, his consciousness. On the contrary, he was not fully conscious of the movements his hand made. The stereognostic perception and the muscular sense were intact; only the consciousness of the origin of the accomplished movement was obscure; therefore, it was only the sphere of voluntary motor power in the personal consciousness which was touched.

The first manifestations of pseudo-automatic writing claimed to emanate from a deceased relation. This relation was quite disposed to communicate facts known to the sensitive, but manifested very little eagerness to answer questions which the sensitive's consciousness could not answer. Invited to justify his identity, the personality showed itself incapable of giving the slightest proof.

Meanwhile, the sensitive tried ordinary writing, and obtained it. It presented the same features as planchette-writing. A new personification came and assisted the deceased relation—he was nothing less than a Mahatma from India! At this time the sensitive was reading the works of Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Sinnett, especially the latter's *Occult World*. The communications were signed *Hymaladar*. This Mahatma presented nothing of transcendental interest, and was lavish with his promises. He declared he was ready to undertake the exoteric education of the sensitive, who, in his *naïveté*, yielded to the Mahatma's advice. The Mahatma promised to transport him actually over to India, to precipitate letters, etc. The promises were never fulfilled.

Other personifications manifested; the sensitive tried to obtain some proofs of identity, but without success. On the other hand the personifications were verbose on general topics, and gave proof of a lively imagination. Here are some specimens of their style and ideas.

A guide, signing himself *Memnon*, expressed the following opinion upon a certain mystic book:—

'. . . Do not allow yourself to be led away by its descriptions: they apply to all those who, in no matter what religion, devote themselves to a contemplative life, which is, assuredly, a blessing, but one which must be won by patience and effort. When the duties common to every man born of the flesh have been fulfilled, abstention from the imperious duty of procreation can, and really does, favour the faculty for projection of the soul, and renders *ecstasy* easier; but not only is such a development artificial, it is also reprehensible to arrive at that contemplative life, without having founded a family in compliance with the imprescriptible law of nature. Herein lies the original vice of all religious communities which offend creation's views; it would suffice to generalise the doctrine to discover its falseness immediately. Man has physical as well as moral duties to accomplish: he is composed of a body and a soul; he is culpable when he subordinates one of his composing parts to the other. The senses have no more the right to command the body than the soul has of making the body suffer in its physical functions. The suppression of any natural function is criminal, and every religious order does this. This is their capital error. He who has raised children and satisfied the physical evolution, he alone has the right to withdraw from the world, to lead a contemplative life, when the body, worn out by old age, has finished its active rôle here below. It is only then that preparation is useful.'

The pencil was verbose every time general subjects were broached. Whenever the sensitive pressed the personification on some given point, the latter was silent —he disappeared. The questions were written as well as the replies. There are some amusing conversations, where the 'spirit' plays a rôle other than that of simple interlocutor. By way of specimen, I note the following dialogue:—

Q. Do you see me?

A. Yes, but badly; we do not see matter clearly; a long apprenticeship is necessary, and we have not been working long with matter.

Q. Is it long since you left your sphere?

A. Eight years.

Q. Who are you ?

A. Monsieur A.

Q. And ?

A. And Mamie Beaupuyat.

Q. You have known me ?

A. Yes, I was one of your college friends.

Q. Where ?

A. At N.

Q. What college ?

A. Z. College.

Q. Will you write your name again ?

A. Maurice B. (here the name of a street).

Q. I do not remember having known you my friend. Remark this, you have given me two different names, Beaupuyat and B.

A. Many details are forgotten in Paradise (*sic*).

Q. Ah ! strange ambassador ! You come to see me without letters of credit !

A. Good-bye.

Q. Good-night.

The subconscious excuse for the contradiction pointed out is not wanting in humour.

Here is another example :—

Q. Are my guides here ?

A. We are always at hand to help you, always.

Q. Will you show yourselves to me ?

A. Ought you to ask us for anything before giving us tokens ?

. . . . . .

Q. Is it X. who is influencing me ?

A. Yes.

Q. But he is dead ?

A. Yes.

Q. But you forbid me to evoke the dead ?

A. We are the spirits of dead people.

Q. But you told me you were Mahatmas ?

A. We are *Mahatmas*, but *Mahatmas* are not living.

Q. Is it again a trick of my subliminal ?

A. Yes, your subliminal is the will.

Q. Yes, it is true, but the will is chiefly superliminal.

A. You are right.

Q. Why do you always make fun of me ?

A. We do so to please the Lord.

Q. This is cruel. I am in earnest, and your lord, if he be just, will punish you severely for your farces.

A. Yes, he will give us the whip.

Q. I do not like this joking, leave me.

A. Always . . . (illegible).

Q. What ?

A. Magician.

Q. Am I a magician ?

A. Yes.

Q. I did not know it.

A. Always do good, and you will be happy.

Q. Happiness is not so easy to obtain.

A. Good-bye.

Q. Who are you ?

A. A friend.

This is simply nonsense. I have quoted these three examples in order to show the growing analogy found therein with the delirium of dream. It is scarcely visible in the first quotation, which is coherent, logical and of fairly elegant form. But the ideas which are expressed have their sources in subconscious souvenirs: they will be found in *Spirit Teachings*, *Higher Aspects of Spiritualism*, *Occult World*, and *Esoteric Buddhism.*

The second quotation reveals decided oneiroscopic associations. The name Beaupuyat awakens no souvenir; the name of a street having nearly the same assonance is then substituted for it; this is an illogical association, formed by phonetic elements. The explanation of the contradiction between the names given successively is very illogical, but it is what might be called 'a good hit.' This is one of our ways of reasoning with ourselves in dreams.

The third quotation shows a still more marked degree of incoherence. The first replies are attempts at conciliation of contradictions impossible to do away with: they are affirmations which are but echoes of the questions asked. I do not quite understand the association between subliminal and will; but the emergence of the idea of will gives place to a curious phenomenon: the evolution of a parasitical association of ideas bringing to mind the psychological phenomenon which A. Pick describes under the name of *Vorbeidenken.* We have non-expressed stages, from will to 'God's will,' words which are often associated together in religious language: 'to do the will of God, to be agreeable to God.' The incoherent reply, which consists in saying that the Mahatmas make fun of the subject in order to be agreeable to God, is then the last link of a chain of latent associations; this last link is the only one shown. Also, the incongruous idea of beings who call themselves spirits and wise men, and declare they must be whipped, is the result of an evident association between the idea of being severe consciously expressed, and the idea of severity, chastisement, whip, average latent terms. The psychological analysis, therefore, reveals to us mental processes which are known and classed. It shows us, that the dream character of subconscious messages does not differ from that observed in the mental operations of the consciousness, as soon as the latter's personal and voluntary activity becomes weakened or gradually gives place to spontaneous ideation. I think the three examples I have chosen show this progressive debilitation very well, and also the corresponding accentuation of the characteristics of dream in the messages obtained. The case I examined is at the limit of paranormal facts, but the inquisitive reader has at his disposal the weighty analysis of the transcendental cases published in the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, epitomised by M. Sage in his book *Mrs. Piper et la Société Anglo-Américaine des Recherches Psychiques*, to verify the accuracy of my conclusion, viz. that the mental processes in simple cases, as well as in the more complex cases, are identical.

I return to the case observed by me. The obstinacy of even the best and most moral of these personalities in refusing to expose themselves to any control whatsoever, the falsehoods they were imprudent enough to overlook, and the critical attitude of mind of the sensitive himself, awakened a spirit of distrust in the latter. He began to observe himself, and the first result of his observation of the conditions under which the writing was produced, was the gradual disappearance of the sensation of impulse which he had felt: his pencil, he told me, had seemed to follow a magnet. As this sensation weakened and disappeared, so the personifications affected to be either grievously pained, or cold and dignified, or frankly insolent; they all deplored the sensitive's incredulity. The relation bade him adieu and appeared no more; Hymaladar himself ceased to be interested in his *chela*. The sensitive soon saw the futility of his efforts, and the writing ceased completely to present the peculiarity it had offered during several weeks.

This case is instructive, because it is on the borderline between conscious and unconscious phenomena. Thanks to the clear and complete indications on the part of the sensitive, I was able to reconstitute the genesis of every personality. That of the relation is easily explained, but Hymaladar was more rebellious to analysis. Upon investigation it appeared to me to be the synthesis of the words Hymalaya and Damodar. The one, which quite naturally evokes the thought of India, is the dwelling-place of the sages who, it appears, preside in a very secret manner at the evolution of the theosophical movement; the disciple or *chela* of one of them was the guru, the master of Madame Blavatsky. His name was Damodar. The associated ideas—Blavatsky, India, Hymalaya, Damodar—lead up to the word *Hymala* (ya Damo) *dar*; the genesis of the word is thus quite comprehensible.

At present I am observing a more complex case, in which paranormal phenomena accompany automatic writing. The sensitive, who is in the act of developing his medianity, unfortunately gives himself up rather unwillingly to observation. He does not know English, yet he has automatically written certain phrases in English. However, we must not conclude therefrom, that these messages are of transcendental origin. This sensitive is a well-educated person, and most probably English words and phrases have fallen under his eyes from time to time; thus the irruption of English in messages he obtains may be explained by the emergence of subconscious souvenirs. The tenor of the messages is still vague; the writing is often difficult to read; no precise fact capable of being analysed and verified has so far been given. It appears to me useless, in these circumstances, to give examples of these messages, but I will point out an interesting peculiarity which I have observed only with this sensitive. This is the concomitancy of raps and automatic writing. I have most carefully studied these raps; they appear to me to occur on a level with the point of the pencil. The phenomenon is forthcoming in broad daylight, and under excellent conditions of observation. An attentive examination shows that the point of the pencil does not leave the paper. The raps are forthcoming even when I put my finger on the upper end of the pencil, and when I press the point on the paper. The pencil vibrates, but it is not displaced. As these raps are very sonorous, I have calculated that it would be necessary to give rather a strong knock in order to reproduce them artificially: the necessary movement would require raising the pencil from the twentieth to the eighth of an inch, according to the intensity of the raps. Now, the pencil does not appear to be displaced. Further, when the writing runs quickly the raps succeed one another with great rapidity, and the close examination of the writing reveals no stops; the text is unbroken, no trace of pencil dots is perceptible, there is no thickening of the characters. The conditions of observation appear to me to exclude the possibility of a trick. I will add that during this automatic writing the arm and hand of the sensitive are in a state of anæsthesia.

3. Phonetic and mixed automatisms. I combine these two categories of automatisms because the automatism is seldom purely phonetic. The sensitive makes gestures appropriate to the personage he represents, and the automatism is complicated; the muscles which regulate the emission of the voice are not the only ones in activity.

This kind of automatism is very easy to observe. It is the basis of ordinary spiritistic seances; it is called 'incarnation' or 'control,' and the sensitive, who produces this kind of phenomena, is called a 'trance medium.'

Its necessary condition is the trance or somnambulistic state. The sensitive falls asleep spontaneously, or is put to sleep artificially by passes. After a certain time, more or less long, and after diverse movements, the most usual of which seem to be muscular contractions of the face and pharynx, the sensitive enters into somnambulism and passes into the secondary state. Some subjects fall asleep very quickly. It is not a rare thing in spiritistic seances, for two or three persons to enter into a state of somnambulism at the same time. The perfection of the sensitive's acting, when personifying diverse individualities, is most striking when they have known the persons they are imitating. Observation is extremely interesting. In spiritistic seances these personalities, naturally, always represent spirits.

I have seen nothing in this order of phenomenon which appeared to me worth noting. Everything is easily explained by the play of impersonal memory and by imitation. Many transcendental facts have been related to me: personally I have observed none. But I have very rarely tried to provoke trance phenomena. They do not present the same interest to me as physical phenomena do. The most interesting I have seen, were given me by Madame Agullana, in private seances. This sensitive's most curious personality is that of a doctor, who died about eighty or a hundred years ago: he has always refused to give any information concerning his identity; the reason he advances for maintaining his incognito—the existence of his family, members of whom are living in the south of France—does not satisfy me; I imagine he is withholding the best. His medical language is archaic. He calls plants by their ancient medical names; his diagnosis, accompanied with extraordinary explanations, is generally correct, but the description of the internal symptoms which he perceives is such as would astound a doctor of the twentieth century. Matters, fluids, molecules, dance a strange saraband. Nevertheless, my colleague from beyond the tomb—not at all loquacious, by the way—retains a serenity, which is proof against everything, and humbly recognises that there are many things he does not know. During the ten years I have been observing him, he has not changed, and presents a logical continuity which is most striking. Persons, who are not *au courant* with the features of secondary personalities, might easily be deceived and believe in his objective reality. Be he what he says he is, or be he what I suspect him to be, that is to say, one of the sensitive's secondary personalities, my *confrère* Hippolytus is an interesting interlocutor, and, with his conversation, one could write a work on clinical medicine which would be rather out of the common. This is not the place to study him, for his examination only raises problems of psychological interest. In these phenomena of mixed automatism, of 'incarnation,' we observe the complete development of *personifications*. These personifications are the feature common to all psychical phenomena. Raps claim to emanate from a given personality, paranormal movements have the same pretension, automatic script assures us of a like origin: 'incarnation' or 'control' puts forth the claim of being the personality himself, in full possession of the sensitive's body, directing and using it as he pleases.

The problem which these personifications set before us is, perhaps, the most interesting of all those which are to be met with, in the kind of study to which this book is consecrated. I have pointed out, that the general feature of these personifications is to present themselves as living—or more usually deceased human beings. My observations do not tend to make me think that this claim is well founded. It does not come within the scheme of my work to analyse the different hypotheses, which have been emitted by the different mystic schools. Occultists profess to see astral shells, in these personifications, debris—still organised—of the body's astral double, which the superior principles have abandoned. Theosophists have about the same theory, designating these debris by the name of elementals. Spiritists attribute their phenomena to the spirits of the dead. Roman Catholics see the intervention of the devil therein, while the greater number of savants only see fraud or chimera. All these opinions are too absolute. There is, certainly, something; but I think this something is neither spirit, shell, elemental nor demon. It is not my province to formulate in detail my theory: properly speaking, I have not any. I observe without bias of any kind, and the only indication I can give is the following:—in almost every case I have studied, I believe I recognised the mentality of the medium and the sitters in the personification. It is true, there are certain cases which I cannot explain in this way; but the spirit hypothesis explains them still less satisfactorily. We must continue seeking.

The examples I have given of intellectual phenomena show that in every case of which I have been able to make a thorough analysis, we discover the action of the impersonal consciousness. This explains itself naturally, since the personal and voluntary consciousness excludes by definition the co-existence of a second personality. Nevertheless, this is not absolutely true. The medium, of whom I have already spoken, he who produces raps when writing, writes automatically while he speaks, in quite a natural way, of other things. In fact, he only writes well when his attention is drawn away from his hand. As soon as he is conscious of the movement, the writing ceases. Things happen with him, as though the normal consciousness lost all contact with the motor centres of the arm and hand. A special consciousness appears to be developed in these centres.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF AUTOMATISM

The difficulty, which is raised by the interpretation of facts of the kind exposed above, is considerable. It is to be remembered, that the sensitive of whom I have just spoken, does not appear to suffer any diminution of his normal personality; he converses with facility, his normal personal souvenirs and his intelligence remain intact. His arm and hand alone, especially the latter, are withdrawn from consciousness, and this in the sensitive as well as in the motor spheres. Janet sees in these facts psychological disaggregation, and in many cases his explication is the correct one. But it cannot be applied to the case I am speaking of, for no diminution in the memory, intelligence or mental activity is perceptible. However, Janet seems to have only seen one of the phases of these curious phenomena. I attach so much importance to the establishing of the *point de fait* that, before all analysis thereof, I desire to state it precisely, successively with the discussion.

The first circumstance of fact which observation of the case I am examining reveals, is the one I have just pointed out: an apparent dissociation of the normal personality, from the cenesthesic consciousness of which a portion of the body is withdrawn. The second circumstance is the relative knowledge of English—with correct orthography excepting one mistake only—which is shown by the apparently self-governed limb. Note also that I feel sure that this knowledge of English is probably subconscious, and that I have supposed, although this has not been proved, that the writer has now and then come across a few English sentences, containing the phrases written by him. These two circumstances are, for me, observed facts.

From these facts there results a third fact, the consequence of the first two: the consciousness, which directs the limb withdrawn from the personality, appears to have more considerable resources—at least from a memory point of view—than the normal consciousness. If it be correct to speak of apparent disaggregation in that which concerns the conscious normal personality, it seems to me that this expression ceases to represent the facts, as soon as it can be demonstrated, that the consciousness manifested by the automatism is more extensive than the normal consciousness. If we are to attach a precise meaning to language—and Janet's language is so clear and simple that we may not accuse this elegant and remarkable writer of want of precision—the idea of disaggregation implies the division of the personal consciousness into elementary parts, according to definition, lesser than the whole. This phenomenon is frequently observed, *e.g.* when automatic writing shows itself to be incapable of logical co-ordination, of which I have given examples; sometimes there is no trace of thought, properly so called, *e.g.* when the sensitive confines himself to repeating *sine die* the same letter, or traces nothing but lines, and strokes, etc. But can we consider the case as one of veritable disaggregation where the hand, withdrawn from normal consciousness, appears to dispose of a greater mass of souvenirs than the normal consciousness does?

Janet himself has verified the fact, and gives some examples of it in his work, *Névroses et idées fixes*, vol. i.

After that, is it not contradictory to say (*Automatisme psychologique*, p. 452): 'The result of our studies has been to bring back the diverse phenomena of automatism to their essential conditions—most of these phenomena depend upon a state of anæsthesia or abstraction. This state is connected with the narrowing of the field of consciousness, and this narrowing itself is due to the feebleness of synthesis and the disaggregation of the mental compound into diverse groups smaller than they should normally be. These diverse points are easy to verify; the state of abstraction, incoherence, of disaggregation, in a word, of suggestible individuals has often been pointed out.' How can a group, smaller than the mental compound of which it forms one of the parts, be more considerable than that compound? How can a part be greater than its whole? This is, nevertheless, a fact easily verifiable in the domain of memory and sometimes in that of intelligence. Janet's theory explains only some of the observable facts; it is only partially true. It suffices to compare the quotation I have just given with what he says in his work, *Névroses et idées fixes*, vol. i. p. 137: 'The souvenir even in somnambulism only exists if the patient be oblivious to everything and replies automatically to questions, by the mechanical association of ideas without reflection, without the personal perception of what he is doing.

'. . . The souvenir, in a word, is only manifested unknown to the person: it disappears when the person has to speak or write in his own name, conscious of what he is doing.' For Janet this is the sign of mental disaggregation.

The quotations I have just given define sharply Janet's opinion, and show up his mistake and his contradiction. That which becomes disaggregated is the *personality*, the *personal consciousness.* But it does not become resolved into groups smaller than they ought normally to be, since these groups often show themselves to be more comprehensive than the mental compound. It is, therefore, illogical to consider them as a part which has become dissociated from the whole.

I have already had occasion to express my manner of thinking in other writings : nevertheless, perhaps I may be permitted to indicate the direction which psychological interpretation should take in order to avoid an encounter with facts.

The personal consciousness is only one of the modalities of the general consciousness. Clinical observation reveals that, in a great many cases, it has been proved, that the souvenirs stored up in the general consciousness are infinitely more numerous, than those which the personal consciousness has at its free disposition. Myers has expressed these ideas most happily in the following words ('The Subliminal Consciousness,' *Proceedings, S. P. R.*, vii. p. 301) :—

'I suggest, then, that the stream of consciousness in which we habitually live is not the only consciousness which exists in connection with our organism. Our habitual or empirical consciousness may consist of a mere selection from a multitude of thoughts and sensations, of which some at least are equally conscious with those that we empirically know. I accord no primacy to my ordinary waking self, except that among my potential selves this one has shown itself the fittest to meet the needs of common life. I hold that it has established no further claim, and that it is perfectly possible that other thoughts, feelings, and memories, either isolated or in continuous connection, may now be actively conscious, as we say, 'within me'—in some kind of co-ordination with my organism, and forming some part of my total individuality. I conceive it possible that at some future time, and under changed conditions, I may recollect all; I may assume these various personalities under one single consciousness, in which ultimate and complete consciousness the empirical consciousness which at this moment directs my hand may be only one element out of many.'

He appears to me to be nearer the truth than Janet is: I do not know if we shall ever arrive at that complete consciousness which Myers hopes for, but it seems to me probable, that our personal consciousness is only one element of our general consciousness. This latter becomes concrete and definite, but also grows less by becoming personal. The apparent supremacy of the personal consciousness may be only an effect of the circumstances in which we are evolving; if Darwin's ideas are true, we can understand that the necessities of life may have favoured the development of the active, voluntary, personal consciousness; we can imagine other conditions—which the monastic life sometimes realises—where the active and voluntary phases of the general consciousness may be less evolved than its receptive and passive phases. Therefore, the psychologist finds the study of hagiography teeming with information.

Janet's disaggregation is but the weakening of the sentiment of the conscious and voluntary personal activity, of what I called the sentiment of the personal participation in intercurrent psychological phenomena. It is no veritable disaggregation ; it is a disappearance of one modality of the consciousness, of one of its *limited expressions*, so to speak. However, I recognise, with Janet, that this mode of expression of the consciousness is the necessary basis of our activity in *ordinary life*, and that it is legitimate to consider as invalids, those persons in whom it is normally wanting. But the fact itself of its disappearance has more the features of an *integration* than of a *disintegration*, since upon an attentive examination, the personal consciousness is revealed as a limitation and a special determination of the general consciousness of which it is, in a way, a dismemberment. If I dared to use metaphysical language, I would say that rational and voluntary activity is in reality a disaggregation; personality is only a contingent and limited manifestation of the being, or rather of individuality. This latter, to use the expression of an eminent philosopher, would be superior to reason itself, and of irrational essence, an idea which contains the first principles of a new philosophy. I make this incursion into metaphysics merely to show how narrow Janet's theories are, and what different consequences result from such a professional manner of thinking as his is, and from a more general conception of that, of which his manner of thinking only concerns one particular case.

The facts, moreover, condemn Janet's theory. I have too high an opinion of the distinguished man whose ideas I criticise, but whose works I admire sincerely, not to be convinced that he has only observed undeveloped subjects. What demonstrates this in my eyes is his timid affirmation, that ‘nearly always (I do not say always in order not to prejudice an important question) these mediums are neurotics, when they are not downright hysterics.’ It is difficult to discuss an opinion expressed with so much reserve, and I can only commend him for his circumspection, for my personal observations contradict his. I have seen many mediums: the best were not *neurotics* in the medical sense of the word. The finest experiments I have made have been with persons appearing to present none of the stigmæ of hysteria. Up to the present Janet seems to have operated with invalids only, and I am not surprised, therefore, that he should assimilate the automatic phenomena of sensitives with those of his hysterical patients. It would be surprising were it otherwise. I am not going to defend spiritistic mediums; they appear to me to present very poor interest—at least in ordinary seances—but my duty is to protest against the generality of the judgment which Janet brings to bear upon automatic phenomena. Those facts, which are worthy of careful observation, differ essentially from those which ordinary hysterics present. They indicate no *misère psychologique*—quite the contrary, and I will state the reasons why.

The discussion, in order to be clear, must be divided:

1. The phenomena observable with good mediums are not those we observe in hysterical patients. I said I had obtained raps and movements without contact under conditions of control, which appeared to me to be convincing. I added that I had obtained by raps, or by the rappings of a table without contact, words and

phrases which were extremely coherent. This is not quite the kind of phenomena to which hospital patients have accustomed us. What does Janet say on this point?

'The essential point of spiritism is indeed, we believe, the disaggregation of psychological phenomena, and the formation beyond the personal perception of a second series of thoughts detached from the first. As for the means which the second personality employs to manifest itself unknown to the first—movements of tables, automatic writing or speaking, etc. . . . —this is a secondary question (*sic*). Where do those sounds come from which are heard on tables and walls in answer to questions? Is it from a movement of the toes, of that contraction of the tendon supposed by Jobert de Lamballe . . .? Is it from a contraction of the stomach and from a veritable ventriloquism as Gros. Jean supposes, or from some other physical action yet unknown? Are they produced by the automatic movements of the medium himself, or, indeed, as appears to me most likely in some cases, *in the obscurity demanded by the spirits* (!) by the subconscious actions of one of the assistants, who deceives others and himself at the same time, and who becomes an accomplice without knowing it? It does not matter very much.'

That is not my opinion. I think, on the contrary, it matters a great deal. I am positive that every sincere and patient experimenter will observe, as I have done, in broad daylight, and not in obscurity, sounds and movements which will not appear to be explicable by any known cause. Those who, like myself, have verified these facts, will not dream of attributing them to unconscious or involuntary movements, to the cracking of a tendon, to ventriloquism. The cases observed by me will not admit of this explanation. Things happen as though some force or other were produced by the medium and the assistants, and could act beyond the limits of the body. If this fact be correct, can we consider it as secondary and without importance? On the contrary, does it not open to the psychology of the future the road of direct observation and experimentation, if, as I have tried to show, this force preserves certain relations with our general consciousness? Does this not make one think of those words of Proclus when speaking of souls:—

Τρίτη δὲ αὐταῖς πάρεστιν ἡ κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν ὕπαρξιν ἐνέργεια, κινητικὴ μὲν ὑπάρχουσα τῶν φύσει ἑτεροκινήτων. Souls have a third force inherent to their essence, that of moving things which by their very nature are put into movement by an energy foreign to themselves.

Has not Janet a singular way of reasoning? He makes a reserve on the existence of another 'physical action yet unknown,' but quickly forgets it, and reasons as though that action were perfectly well known. 'That action, whatever it may be, is *always* an involuntary and unconscious action of some one or other: the involuntary word from the intestines (!) is not more miraculous than is the involuntary word from the mouth; it is the psychological side of the problem which is the most interesting, and which ought to be the most studied.'

I am sure that those of my readers, whose patience has not been too severely tested by my long analysis of facts observed, will not consider my distinguished colleague's conclusion as acceptable. The most interesting side of the phenomenon is, I think, the one which reveals to us an apparently new mode of action of the nervous influx upon matter.

2. These phenomena, again, are not the indication of a *misère psychologique*, as Janet thinks.

Let us discuss the cases observed by me. To follow my reasoning, it will be necessary to be familiar with the works of Gurney, Podmore, Sidgwick, Myers, Barrett, Hodgson, Lodge, Hyslop, du Prel, Perty, Hellenbach, Aksakow, Richet, de Rochas. To-day, it is no longer possible to shun the work of such savants, (when dealing with a question of such a nature as that which engrossed Janet) by simply saying as he did 'that he had not had occasion to read the *Philosophie der Mystik* of a man like du Prel.' He should have read that book . . . and many more.

It seems to me to be now quite an established fact, that the impersonal consciousness is capable of perceiving accurate impressions independently of the senses. It translates these impressions in diverse ways in order to transmit them to the personal consciousness, but these translations are concrete and symbolical. It is a hallucination visual, auditory, or tactile. The form of *subliminal* messages, to use one of Myers' expressions, is always the same, be the fact thus transmitted true or false, be it a reminiscence or a premonition. This is already a psychological ascertainment of great importance, for it puts us on the road we must follow, in order to discover the mental process of this psychological phenomenon. But there is something else. The hysteric who automatically simulates a drunkard, a general, a child, offers us a very different spectacle to the one offered us by the sensitive who telepathically sees an event happening afar off, or who predicts the future, or reveals facts unknown to himself and the assistants. There are thousands of examples of these facts ; I have given a few which were observed by myself or related to me first-hand.

Is it possible to consider this extraordinary faculty as a 'disaggregation'? Is it possible to class phenomena of this kind with the commonplace phenomena of somnambulism and 'incarnation,' the only ones Janet has observed? It suffices to put the question to receive the answer immediately. The psychological mechanism of these facts, so unlike one to the other, is probably the same, but the cause of the apparent automatism, motor or sensory, is certainly not the same. The sensitive, of whom I spoke, who sees in the mirror twenty-four hours beforehand, the very scenes she actually sees the next day, presents to us a phenomenon of considerable importance. It intimates that time and space are forms of the personal thought and consciousness, but that probably they have not the same signification for the impersonal consciousness. It is a phenomenon which, if it be true, demonstrates experimentally that Kant's theory upon the contingency of these 'categories' necessary to all conscious and personal perception is exact.

I am quite aware of the nature of the reply I shall meet with : my observations have been defective ; and all those who before me affirmed the existence of the same facts were also deceived. This simplifies the discussion. The history of science offers us many an example of the manner in which facts are received, when they contradict current ideas. Kant said more than a hundred years ago, in his *Traüme eines Geistersehers*, 1, i.: 'Das methodische Geschwätz der hohen Schulen ist oftmals nur ein Einverständniss durch veränderliche Wortbedeutungen eine schwer zu lösenden Frage auszuweichen, weil das bequeme und mehrentheils vernünftige, "Ich weiss nicht," auf Akademien nicht leichtlich gehört wird.'[1]

The discussion on Janet recalled to my mind these words of Kant's. His expression, *misère psychologique* is one of those words of double meaning, true, if we consider only a part of the facts and one aspect only of the phenomenon, that which concerns the personal consciousness; inexact, if we study the facts in their totality and the phenomenon they reveal in its generality. The being who would be capable of perceiving at a distance, by looking into space and into time, would have faculties superior to the normal; he would not be the inferior being imagined by Janet.

An attentive and patient observation will show him, I am sure, the reality of the facts which I point out; may he not deny this possibility without putting himself under the requisite conditions for observing these facts.

It belongs to the future to decide the question, and I have no doubt whatever upon the nature of the verdict.[2]

To sum up, an attentive observation of the facts shows, that in psychical phenomena we observe the emergence of personifications which may be secondary personalities, but which in really clear cases present particular features, and seem to possess information which is inaccessible to the normal personality. They may co-exist with the latter, without any disorder manifesting itself in the sensitive or motor spheres; in other cases, they encroach upon the normal personality, which may either lose the use and sensation of one member, or be deprived of several members. Finally, the personification can invade the whole of the organism and end in incarnation or 'control,' a phenomenon of apparent possession. When it reaches this maximum development, the personification manifests a remarkable autonomy, and appears to be much less suggestible than in the intermediate stages of its evolution.

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[1] The methodical idle prattle of the high schools is often only an understanding to elude, by words of variable acceptation, a question difficult of solution, for we do not often hear in academies such convenient and ordinarily intelligent words as 'I do not know.'

[2] See Appendix A.

What are these personifications? I do not know. The problem they raise in some cases is extremely difficult to solve. I can only say that they do not appear to me to be what they claim to be. Is it collective consciousness? Is it self-deception? Is it a spirit? Everything is possible, to me nothing is certain save one thing, namely, that we must not put our trust in them.

I say this for the benefit of spiritists, who have a tendency to believe blindly everything their good spirits tell them. These 'spirits' may make mistakes, though they may not wish to deceive you. Never abandon yourself or submit the conduct of your life and affairs to their guidance: submit only to the rule of reason and sound judgment. Be not over-credulous.[1]

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[1] See Appendix C.

CHAPTER VI

SOME RECENTLY OBSERVED PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA

An account of some recently observed Psychical Phenomena produced in the presence of Doctor Maxwell and Professor Charles Richet. Arranged by the Translator from notes furnished by Dr. Maxwell.[1]

DURING the last two years exceptional opportunities have been offered Professor Richet and Dr. Maxwell of observing a medium—whom we will call *Meurice*—who has furnished Dr. Maxwell with many of his most important examples of psychical phenomena. I refer to phenomena spoken of on pp. 74, 81-2, 101-3, 136-7, 152-5, 160-2, 195-9, 201-2, 250.

Dr. X.—a friend of Professor Richet—who does not wish his name to be mentioned, having been present with Professor Richet and Dr. Maxwell at some of their experiments, has sent Dr. Maxwell a few notes concerning those seances at which he was present. Dr. Maxwell has authorised me to put these notes in order, and to add to them a few extracts from letters written by Dr. Maxwell to Professor Richet and myself.

These notes and letters were written either during or immediately after the seances, if I may so call the impromptu occasions on which the phenomena to be spoken of were obtained.

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[1] It is scarcely necessary for me to certify to the accuracy of the phenomena mentioned in this chapter, especially when I am spoken of as having been present.—MAXWELL.

There is, in these notes, a miscellaneous stream of evidence, the complexity and importance of which may be presumed, when it is pointed out that a useful combination of two orders of research has been at work therein. Dr. Maxwell was chiefly interested in the study of the facts concomitant with the phenomena, whatever they might be, whilst Professor Richet devoted himself to the analysis of the personifications, and to the study of the manifestations from a purely psychological point of view.

Evidence is the touchstone of truth, and though the reading of parts of this chapter may sound more like pages out of a fantastic story than the words of savants, yet the publication of these facts has been judged necessary by Professor Richet and Dr. Maxwell, in their belief that no one is justified in setting aside facts which have been well attested. These facts have been observed—let it not be forgotten—in a spirit of pure scientific curiosity.

It is, therefore, hoped that this chapter will receive the thoughtful consideration of many ; and that careful analysis will be especially given to those very parts, the unreal-like romantic nature of which seems to render them, at a random glance, unworthy of serious thought.

THE MEDIUM AND HIS PHENOMENA

An acute analysis of a medium is of primary importance in the examination and appreciation of his phenomena, therefore we will first of all dwell a little on the personality of M. Meurice, the medium in question.

He is a friend of Dr. Maxwell's—a friend of some years' standing.

He is a slightly built man, the reverse of robust, but endowed with remarkable vitality and recuperative powers. He is thirty-two years of age ; he is unmarried. He is highly sensitive and reserved in disposition, and forms quick but lasting sympathies and antipathies. He gives one the impression of being always in a state of hypertension ; his nervous system is most finely strung, and he appears to experience an irresistible need of constant physical movement. He passes easily from the extremes of joy to the extremes of sadness. Highly nervous though he be, Dr. Maxwell has never observed any signs of hysteria, or any symptoms of a lack of equilibrium in the medium's mentality. He is not amenable to the hypnotic sleep, but Dr. Maxwell says he has sometimes thought that he might eventually succeed in inducing that state. The few attempts so far made in this direction have given no results ; moreover, M. Meurice does not care to submit himself to this kind of experimentation. His cutaneous and other sensibilities are normal ; his reflexes also are normal.

He suffers occasionally from violent headaches and neuralgia ; and has frequent gastric attacks, notably after the production of telekinetic phenomena. Otherwise his health is good. During the production of phenomena, M. Meurice often acknowledges to a sinking sensation in the epigastric region, and says it is as though something material were being drawn out of him at such moments.

He is well read in every branch of literature, and has a most retentive memory. One has the notion that this medium, to a great extent, has under his conscious control a large range of what is generally submerged faculty.

Subliminal operation is, no doubt, constantly going on with us all, but it is most apparent in M. Meurice. One feels with him that his unconscious memory is always on the alert.

Amnesia appears to follow rapidly in the footsteps of his visions, but several things seem to indicate that this amnesia is only apparent.[1]

Dr. Maxwell says he always thought he had a psychic in his friend. However, notwithstanding his medical studies, and wide range of knowledge of things in general, M. Meurice was ignorant of metapsychical phenomena, and averse to becoming acquainted with the practices of spiritism or anything of that nature. Little by little Dr. Maxwell induced his friend to take some interest in these phenomena, and one day he persuaded him to put his hands on a table with a view to seeing whether the two of them together could obtain any phenomena. Raps were immediately forthcoming ; they resounded on the floor. The medium was startled by the unusual noise and quickly rose from the table. Nothing more was received on that occasion or for some time afterwards. Then, for two years, M. Meurice reluctantly and irregularly yielded to Dr. Maxwell's persuasions to develop his medianity.

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[1] The amnesia, which appears to follow medianic phenomena, bears a certain relation to the amnesia which follows dreams. It is probably due to the weakness of the links between the conscious personality and the forgotten images. The links exist, but are not strong enough to bind those images to the usual stream of personal consciousness. They serve as clues, however, and the reappearance of the images at a given moment is due to the working of the usual laws of association.—MAXWELL.

For some time he could not be made to see the importance of his phenomena, and Dr. Maxwell refused to give weight to his words by appealing to technical literature. He was desirous of keeping his friend in ignorance of current notions on these phenomena, thinking the results would be of greater value if the soil they sprang from were virgin.

M. Meurice has done all in his power to throw light upon his own phenomena. His co-operation has been precious, for often his fine intelligence and well-trained powers of observation have enabled him to bring into the research valuable analyses of his sensations and impressions. For this medium not only does not lose consciousness during the production of his phenomena, he is often at such moments more thoroughly 'all there'—to use a Scotch expression—than in his unproductive moments of abstraction. True, there have been a few exceptions, but, *as a rule*, he is keenly alive to all that is going on when phenomena is forthcoming.

The passages I have indicated in Dr. Maxwell's work will acquaint the reader with the order and degree of phenomena presented by M. Meurice, when Professor Richet made his acquaintance. Dr. Maxwell had studied, almost exclusively, the physical aspect of the facts he received, and did not encourage phenomena of an intellectual order. This scientific attitude, however, had not prevented the manifestation of the phenomenon of personification; and the 'raps' speedily put forth the claims common to spiritualistic beliefs—in spite of the medium's ignorance of them. When Professor Richet began to experiment with M. Meurice, the 'raps' had already claimed to emanate from 'John King,' 'Chappe d'Auteroche,' a group of four entities calling themselves the 'good fairies,' and, lastly, from two of Dr. Maxwell's deceased friends.

As the capital interest of this chapter lies in the intelligent aspect of the phenomena, there is a fact of paramount importance to be pointed out with emphasis.

Our medium is very amenable to influence, and his phenomena constantly show the effects of suggestion and influence. I do not, by any means, wish to infer that M. Meurice is like wax in the hands of his friends; on the contrary, if it were only a question of personal consciousness, we might say he is almost impervious to the action of extraneous influences. His ways of thinking and acting bear the stamp of independence, and if he yields occasionally to the wishes of his friends, it is out of pure friendship and with deliberation. When, however, we are endeavouring to make a psychological study of a medium, we strive to reach the lower strata at once; the surface is of little interest when we know that the secret lies below. Therefore, when I say that M. Meurice is most amenable to influence, I am bearing in mind that profound region, his general consciousness. The personal consciousness may be rebellious to influence, but the subliminal is reached by subtler means than is its grosser envelope, and is remarkably amenable to the charm of suggestion and the voice of sympathy. In all probability the reader will find sufficient evidence of the accuracy of my assertion in the phenomena to be spoken of in the course of this chapter ; therefore, I will not dwell any further upon this point, although it be an important one.

When experimenting with Eusapia Paladino, Professor Richet had remarked and called attention to the synchronism which existed between her phenomena and her movements or muscular contractions. Dr. Maxwell, in his turn, also remarked it, and forthwith bent his studies in that direction. The conclusion appears to be evident that a profound and far-reaching importance lies in the synchronism between the movements of the experimenters and the phenomena. It was observed that Dr. Maxwell was indeed able to produce phenomena of raps and telekinesis [of very feeble intensity, it is true] by tapping the medium on his hands or shoulder, by firmly squeezing the hands, joined in a circle above the table, or by the simple contraction of his own muscles.

En passant, it may be useful to note that Dr. X. was opposed to the idea that synchronism *always* existed between the phenomena and the movements of the experimenters, that is to say, that muscular contraction was *alone* responsible for the phenomena. Dr. X. was so opposed to this notion, that his presence at seances where this synchronism was being demonstrated, has often been observed to cause all manifestations to cease —to nullify the results. If Dr. X. was able to exercise this power over one centre, it is highly probable that his presence would exercise a like inhibitory influence over other centres of energy, where like experiments were being conducted.

Though Dr. Maxwell had obtained not a few phenomena showing intelligence (*e.g.* raps claiming to emanate from various personifications), yet, as he says in his book, pages 26, 28, and 83, he did not feel drawn towards that order of research, and did his best to keep the phenomena on physical lines. But since Professor Richet has experimented with M. Meurice, the phenomena have developed rapidly along the lines of intellectuality: a result which may, it is true, be due to our medium's good-nature in allowing his power to be used as was desired, or which may be the effect of influence and suggestion. We are inclined to think the latter is nearer the truth, an opinion which is supported by the fact that when Dr. X. and Professor Richet were present—that is to say, within a few days after Dr. X.'s appearance in the circle—synchronous phenomena could rarely be obtained.[1]

Now, all unknown to Dr. Maxwell, Professor Richet had passed the previous three years in the study of these same phenomena from a psychological standpoint, and at the moment of his first visit to Bordeaux, he was particularly absorbed in the research and analysis of intelligent messages received by means of a physical phenomenon. His desire, for the time being, was to receive messages—of identity or otherwise—by means of *raps without contact.*

Already familiar with the fact of synchronism—which a little experience suffices to show is not due to self-suggestion or endosomatic activity—Professor Richet wished to get on to fresh ground; as before said, he wanted intellectuality in a physical phenomenon, and it was not long before he got what he wanted with the medium in question.

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[1] 'Vous voyez, cher ami, que depuis que nous avons expérimenté ensemble, votre influence persiste et nos phénomènes physiques s'orientent vers les messages intellectuels.'—Extract from a letter written by Dr. Maxwell to Professor Richet six weeks after the first series of experiments with Professor Richet were held.

And, *à propos*, perhaps I may be allowed to briefly relate at once the first phenomenon containing intelligence, which Professor Richet obtained with M. Meurice. A short time after having made his acquaintance, the professor and Dr. X. thought they would try to obtain a 'test.' Supposing, for a moment, that an entity, who has several times claimed to be communicating with Professor Richet, really existed, they 'evoked' him, and asked him to give them a sign through M. Meurice, which would denote that he had been listening to a certain conversation held two hours previously. The medium and Dr. Maxwell were unaware that this entity had a speciality of communicating in Latin or Greek. A few hours afterwards, during dinner, raps were heard on the table and other furniture in the vicinity of M. Meurice; when the question was asked as to who was rapping, the Christian name of the entity was given, followed by the word *Confide*. No word, it appears, could have borne more directly upon the conversation in question. There was difficulty in obtaining these two words, the raps—in such abundance when not requested to 'work'—came laboriously, as though some one were picking his steps among brambles, so to speak. The medium himself spelt out the alphabet on this occasion.

. . . . . .

Dr. Maxwell has given an analysis of the raps obtained with M. Meurice, and we especially refer the reader to pages 79-82 and 250.

When raps without contact delay in coming, M.

Meurice takes a lead-pencil, holds it in his hands, and presses one end against the table or on an experimenter according to desire; the raps then resound at the end touching the experimenter or the table.

Anæsthesia is observed only in the hand and arm holding the pencil. "Once or twice," says Dr. X., "I have observed something like cramp seize the hand and arm, and extend along the shoulder blade, to the nape of the neck. On these occasions, I saw the whole arm vibrate after each rap, like the rebounding of an elastic band, and I have sometimes thought it looked as though the 'fluid' passed down the nerves of the arm into the pencil, as though it were flowing through a clear open channel, until it reached the point of the pencil, when a jerk of some kind appeared to force it out on to the wood; not that the pencil or arm *moves* when the rap resounds, but one has the impression of an *interior* jerk of some kind when, in moments of cramp, the rap is heard; this rebounding movement appears to be almost simultaneous with the rap. Though the medium keeps his personality alive, *as a rule*, it seems to me," continues Dr. X. (whose opinion is shared by Professor Richet), "to undergo a diminution of some kind, on these occasions; ideation appears to be slower and more difficult. But, because his arm hurt him when this cramp came on, we have always begged him to cease; therefore we cannot say whether, the experiment courageously continued, complete anæsthesia would eventually set in, accompanied by psychical phenomena."

It is of importance to point out that both Professor Richet and Dr. X. (though Dr. Maxwell does not altogether share their opinion on this point) are inclined to believe that M. Meurice can tell *when* raps are going to be given, when phenomena will be forthcoming and when they will not be forthcoming; a conclusion which is drawn from many observations.

Some of the messages given in this chapter were obtained, when out walking with the medium. On such occasions, M. Meurice would put his hand on a walking-stick or on an umbrella; he preferred the latter. "The raps on the open umbrella are extremely curious," writes Dr. X. "We have heard raps on the woodwork and on the silk at one and the same time; it is easy to perceive that the shock actually occurs in the wood—that the molecules of the latter are set in motion. The same thing occurs with the silk; and here observation is even more interesting still; each rap *looks* like a drop of some invisible liquid falling on the silk from a respectable height. The stretched silk of the umbrella is quickly and slightly but surely dented in; sometimes the force with which the raps are given is such as to shake the umbrella. Nothing is more absorbing than the observation of an apparent conversation—by means of the umbrella—between the medium's personifications. Raps, imitating a burst of laughter in response to the observer's remarks, resound on the silk like the rapid play of strong but tiny fingers. When raps on the umbrella are forthcoming, M. Meurice either holds the handle of the umbrella, or some one else does, whilst he simply touches the handle very lightly with his open palm. He never touches the silk.

"Raps without contact appear to require more force, and are not so frequently forthcoming, as raps with contact—which seem to be always at the medium's command; consequently—and particularly as the tenor of the messages received constituted the chief interest for the time being—the use of the pencil or umbrella has been encouraged."

All the messages given in this chapter, except where the contrary is expressly stated, have been received by contact with a pencil or umbrella—with what Chappe, the chief personification, calls his telephone.

A marked trait in the phenomena is their spontaneity. Months will pass away without the production of a single phenomenon worth mentioning—raps through the pencil can generally be obtained, however. After the attraction of the fan (pages 357-8), nine months elapsed before another telekinetic phenomenon occurred. At other times, the energy is so abundant that while it lasts, that is to say for two or three weeks, the medium may truly be said to live in a world of phenomena in more senses than one; for, at such periods, phenomena are constantly forthcoming. Regular seances are not of much avail with M. Meurice; it is better not to seek, but to know how to receive, which means to know how to wait patiently and attentively.

. . . . . .

A brief analysis of the personifications is necessary before laying bare their work. The first to manifest was 'John King.' Subliminal labour is very transparent herein. M. Meurice had heard not a little of Eusapia Paladino's secondary personality, which calls itself 'John King.'

Then the raps announced the presence of a group of four entities calling themselves the 'fairies'—*les bonnes* *fées.* In fact, the latter were the first to make their presence felt by M. Meurice, though John King was the first to manipulate the raps. The fairies gave the names of Miriam, Yolande, Liliane, and Brigitte ; the latter remained but a short time ; she said she had to go away somewhere ; she was replaced by 'Wicki,' who claims to be an ancestor of Dr. Maxwell's, and to have lived in Ireland during the fifteenth century. The medium associates the odour of jasmine with the fairies. Perhaps the following may suggest a clue to the origin of these entities :—

Some years ago, before Dr. Maxwell had commenced experimenting with his friend, he was in the habit of bidding him good-bye with the words, '*Que les très bonnes vous protègent.*' When the fairies—*les bonnes fées*—appeared, they at once claimed to have been the means of bringing about the meeting of Dr. Maxwell with M. Meurice, and of having fostered their friendship. As for the odour of jasmine : on one occasion, soon after experimentation had begun, the medium was talking to the doctor about good influences ; and he remarked that he sometimes perceived the odour of jasmine without being able to explain it normally. The next time the doctor saw his friend, the raps dictated that the odour of jasmine was the signal of the presence of the good fairies.

The next personification to manifest was said to be S., a very dear friend of Dr. Maxwell's (see pages 160-1). The genesis of this personification is easy to follow. S. was one of the leading men in Bordeaux, where he occupied a very prominent position ; he was extremely well known—though M. Meurice did not know him, and says he never saw him. M. Meurice witnessed Dr. Maxwell's grief when S. died, and heard the former say that he had been very fond of S. I again refer the reader to pages 160-1 for further consideration of the S. personification.

For a few months, the phenomena claimed to emanate chiefly from the fairies—John King gradually fading away. Then 'Chappe d'Auteroche' came on the scene, and has ever since kept the field pretty much to himself,—though he permits of the presence of the personalities already mentioned and a few others if *introduced* by him. His first appearance took the form of a vision in the crystal. The medium saw him in a foreign land, amidst large red flowers, savage tribes and queer-looking boats on canals; he gave his name, the exact day, month and year of his death, and the cause of his death; he described what his work on earth had been—all things which M. Meurice did not *consciously* know. Everything, which was verifiable, was found to be correct.

Some time after this, Chappe gave a long and coherent message by means of tilts of a table without contact—in daylight; on this occasion, he gave his Christian name as 'Adhémar,' which is, probably, an error, as biographies do not mention it.

Chappe is, doubtless, a subliminal entity; but his evolution is more difficult to explain than any of the medium's other personifications. Perhaps M. Meurice—an *avide* reader—has come across some articles in periodicals, concerning the measurements of the solar parallax, by means of the crossing of the sun's surface by the disc of the planet Venus. Chappe was one of the best-known observers; he went to Siberia in 1761, and to California in 1769, to observe those passages. His name must certainly have been mentioned in the newspapers, when the last crossings took place—that is in 1874 and 1882. But on these occasions, M. Meurice was only three and eleven years old! Has he seen the biographical notice of Chappe in Larousse's dictionary? He has no conscious recollection of having read this, nor does he remember ever having heard of Chappe the astronomer. And there, for the present, the matter must stand.

Another personification—H. B.—made its irruption towards the end of 1903. M. Meurice was certainly aware of Dr. Maxwell's profound esteem and affection for H. B.; but for further consideration of this personification, we refer the reader to Dr. Maxwell's notes thereon, pages 287 and following.

. . . . .

I perceive I am about to end these remarks on the medium and his phenomena without having said a word upon a vital point, one which many specialists would require to be satisfactorily settled before consenting to listen to an account of the phenomena. I mean the medium's honesty. Professor Richet, Dr. Maxwell, and Dr. X. say that, for diverse reasons, they cannot doubt this particular medium's honourability. As for raps and telekinetic phenomena, there can be no shadow of doubt about their genuineness; the excellent conditions of light, sight and touch which always prevail when his phenomena are forthcoming, joined to the intelligent co-operation of M. Meurice, who is as much interested in and capable of examining his own phenomena as are the observers, put mystification out of the question.

Is there any evidence of identity, of survival, of intelligent forces other than human, in this chapter? Each one will answer this question after his own manner of thinking. Some will say 'No.' If we could forget the extraordinary romance at the end of this chapter—Series C—we too might answer categorically 'No.' Though we have given all the leading details of the case, family reasons have necessitated the omission of much valuable material in this 'romance,' and perhaps readers will not see so much in it as those who watched its development. But even as it stands, it presents some baffling difficulties. It really seems to indicate that there is activity in the metéthereal environment, and that the spirit can act in that environment. What matter, therefore, if it be the spirit of the living or of the dead? If one can demonstrate its independence of the body, why not the other?

SERIES A

VISIONS

It may be useful to give one or two of our medium's visions. If these simple phenomena—where so much of the personal consciousness seems at play—be studied, some idea may be gained of how far, if at all, the subliminal is responsible for the production of this particular medium's more intricate phenomena, such as intelligent messages given by means of raps without contact.

. . . . . .

M. Meurice was once visiting Paris. He dined at my house on the evening of his arrival. This was the first time I met him. During dinner, an hour or so after his arrival, the medium said he saw a vision near me, and described a personage 'dressed in white and gold-embroidered robes, who looks like a priest of ancient times.' The only interest in this is that it corroborates what two other sensitives, unknown to our medium and to each other, have on two different occasions told me.

M. Meurice also claimed to recognise in me and this bedecked personage, two persons who figured in a dream-vision he had had, three years previous to meeting me. We give this dream chiefly for the sake of its rich symbolism.

The medium wrote an account of the dream at the time, at Dr. Maxwell's request, the latter being struck by its oddity. Here is the vision :—

"I dreamt I was sleeping in a bed, the framework of which nearly touched the ground; the bed was raised on a kind of platform. I was in a large hall, which looked like a church. Suddenly a tall, fair woman, dressed in black, entered. A man wearing long, white, ancient-looking garments, embroidered all over in gold, followed her. Then Dr. Maxwell entered. The man in white read aloud out of the book, which the fair woman held open before him. I was suddenly overcome with emotion. I wept, and wept, and wept. My tears caused the flowers embroidered on the counterpane to spring into life; they grew and multiplied with amazing rapidity, completely covering the bed and, finally, burying me beneath their abundance and weight. The fair woman then said: 'We must seek for him,' and set to work to remove the flowers.

During this operation, Dr. Maxwell stepped on my body; I screamed with pain and awoke."

When M. Meurice awoke, he was suffering from colic; this fact may explain parts of the vision.

. . . . . .

One day in December 1903, at the close of a seance when some fine raps at a distance had been obtained, M. Meurice wrote a few German words. He does not know German. At the same time he saw, in the crystal, the words: 'Kolbe, chimiste, mort à Leipzig 1730.' A few hours after this seance, the medium had a vision of the personification Chappe, who said, 'Vous ne savez donc lire? C'est "mort à Leipzig le 25 Novembre 1884," et pas "1730."'

Kolbe the chemist died at Leipzig on the 25th of November 1884. This information is to be found in Larousse's dictionary.

. . . . . .

The following is an experiment in the transmission of thought which Dr. Maxwell tried with the medium:—

"I gave my hand to M. Meurice, to hold, and said to him—we had been talking, in a vague, general manner of the plurality of existences—'Try and see how I died in my previous existence.'

"Unknown to the medium, I wrote down on paper the words:—*Fall from a horse!*

"M. Meurice answered: 'I see your life, then you fade away into nothingness; you die from an accident; a carriage—no, a horse accident. I see you wearing a shield. You fall from your horse, he crushes you to death.'"

. . . . . .

The medium very often sees the same vision repeat itself in the crystal. This is the vision of a procession of individuals clothed in flowing robes; they follow a long narrow path, which loses itself in a tunnel, into which the procession passes. The vision never varies, save that at times after the procession has disappeared into the tunnel, the path seems to be strewn with the bones of skeletons.

This vision has also been seen, in the same crystal, by our medium's youngest sister, a girl of twenty, who is absolutely ignorant of spiritistic phenomena. She attributed her vision to an optical illusion.

. . . . . .

It has been observed with M. Meurice that the last vision sometimes precedes veridical hallucinations.

This and other facts would lead one to think that very probably, for a medium, there is no test which can discriminate between falsidical and veridical hallucinations. The psychological process appears to be the same, viz. dramatisation and concrete images, instead of abstract concepts or ideas.

Mediums, as a rule, possess parasitic personalities which act in the same way as the normal personality; this feature of hallucinatory phenomena is difficult to analyse, and introduces into the problem a number of unknown factors.

In the case of the medium in question, the secondary personalities are weak. They are always felt and objectived by the normal personality, which is never expelled from the scene—a circumstance which is precious for the observer as the visions are sometimes vivid to a degree.

With M. Meurice the unknown factors, though existing, are reduced to a sort of minimum, and the psychological analysis is perhaps less difficult than in the generality of cases. In this fact lies the value of his intellectual phenomena, though it is a drawback indeed from another point of view, the persistency of the normal consciousness, of the normal will, and even of the normal powers of attention, being probably the cause of the impurities which so frequently stain his intellectual phenomena.

NOTES ON THE PERSONIFICATION 'H. B.'

By Dr. Maxwell

"H. B. died at a very advanced age. He was a man of great kindness of heart, and of deep intelligence. He had received a solid, classical education. He was born in a foreign country, went, when a young man, to a North American state, where he lived for some time. He married, and finally came to Bordeaux—a town to which his wife and all her family belonged. H. B. lived for many years at Bordeaux; but during the last six years of his life he was paralysed. He died at a time when the medium was twenty years of age, and was pursuing his studies in a hospital at Bordeaux. H. B. lived a very retired life, confined to the house because of his infirmity.

"There is every probability that M. Meurice had never heard of H. B. Although I had known my friend for some time before the irruption of this personification, I had been extremely careful to avoid giving him the slightest detail concerning H. B. He had, however, heard me say that H. B. had been one of my dearest friends.

"I had been experimenting for about two years with M. Meurice, when the personification H. B. first manifested. His emergence took place on the 2nd October 1903, in the form of a vision, which my friend had as he was going to bed. On the following day—during a dark seance we were holding in the hopes of obtaining luminous phenomena—M. Meurice described his vision of the previous night. His description vividly recalled H. B. to my mind. I was careful to say nothing, however. During the seance, the personification Chappe signified his presence by means of abundant and loud raps; at the same time M. Meurice told me he saw a face, and certain letters written above it; these letters formed a name, which indicated to me the presence of H. B. Thereupon I asked M. Meurice to give me the Christian and surnames of the vision he claimed to be looking at; in reply, the surname was instantly spelt out by raps without contact; the Christian name was given in French first of all, then it was correctly given in H. B.'s maternal tongue.[1]

"H. B.'s first appearances occurred in M. Meurice's bedroom. From the indications given, I said I had quickly recognised H. B. Unfortunately, under the necessity in which I find myself placed of not bringing H. B.'s family into view, I am unable to mention the principal details. May it suffice to say that I recognised H. B. I may also add that the description of the hair, eyes, beard, stature were exactly and unhesitatingly given.

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[1] H. B.'s Christian name finds its equivalent in French in the name which had been 'rapped out' in the first instance. Dr. Maxwell explained this fact to the rapping force, whereupon the name was correctly given.

This detail of the Christian and surnames is not demonstrative as identity, because (1) the remarks made by Dr. Maxwell were sufficient to have 'fixed' any one who had the slightest knowledge of the language in question; (2) because the medium already knew the surname of Dr. Maxwell's friend. We must not forget, however, that the raps were given without contact.—*Note by the Translator.*

"I may also mention one important detail: M. Meurice described the vision he saw as being seated in an armchair with a blue plaid shawl—with a long fringe—wrapped about his legs. I did not recognise the chair—though I well remember the chair in which H. B. passed the last six years of his life—but the shawl was absolutely correctly described. This is a detail which, I affirm, M. Meurice could not possibly have known; and I consider it highly improbable that fraud could have found it out.

"So much for the first appearance of this personification.

"The visions continued. M. Meurice saw H. B. at different periods of his existence, at times infirm, at other times younger and standing upright. When he appeared young, he wore his beard in a certain fashion; when he appeared aged, he wore his beard differently; these details were correct.

"The vision at first did not speak, and simply looked kindly at him, said M. Meurice.

"The hallucination used to build itself up in the following manner: the medium saw a bluish cloud floating about near a particular armchair in his bedroom; the cloud or shadow remained ill defined, 'as though several veils were being successively removed'; and only one feature at a time—at a vision—seemed to be distinctly

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shown, *e.g.* at one time, the eyes were well shown, the rest of the vision being very indistinct; at another time, the nose was the prominent feature, or the mouth, the hair or the beard, etc.; as though the personification wished to impress one thing at a time upon the medium's perception.

"Finally on the 6th October 1903, in a short journey which M. Meurice made one day to Arcachon, H. B. appeared to him in broad daylight, in an avenue of the forest through which the medium was driving.

"M. Meurice saw, on the roadway a short distance ahead, a person walking very slowly and peculiarly: 'he limped as though the right leg was shorter than the left.' He was a stout man with a round, clean-shaven face. He had a peculiar mark near one of his eyes. He was wearing a tall straw hat, a high collar, the ends rising and meeting in points under the chin, a yellowish walking-stick, the handle of which was made of ivory and fastened to the stick by a silver band; the personage was reading a newspaper, the title of which was in Gothic lettering 'like the *Matin*.' He was wearing a thick gold chain and trinkets. M. Meurice thought he was looking upon a real individual, and it was not until the carriage had driven past, and my friend saw the supposed man suddenly disappear, leaving but a 'whitish blur on the ground,' that he recognised H. B. and the hallucinatory character of his perception.

"I saw M. Meurice about five hours after he had had this vision, when he gave me the above details; I recognised the following as being correct:—

"1. The walk.

"2. A peculiar mark near one of the eyes.

"3. The newspaper; H. B. took in the *Temps*, the title of which is in Gothic lettering like the *Matin*.

"4. The walking-stick, every detail being exact.

"5. The description of the collar was correct.

"6. H. B. used to wear a straw hat.

"7. 'A stout man with a round, clean-shaven face' applies to H. B. before his infirmity made an invalid of him.

"The watch-chain and trinkets were imaginary.

"A few remarks about details 1 and 2: H. B. had twice broken his right leg; the right leg was, as a result of these two accidents, shorter than the left leg. He had therefore a very peculiar and characteristic walk. When M. Meurice was relating the above vision to me, he imitated the walk to perfection. Let it be remembered that H. B. had not walked a step for six years previous to his death; when he was attacked by paralysis, M. Meurice was but fourteen years of age, and was not then living in Bordeaux.

"2. H. B. had a small and peculiar skin mark near his left eye. Now, when M. Meurice related his vision, I told him that he had not localised this mark accurately enough. Thereupon, raps resounded simultaneously on his chair, on the floor, and on a table standing a foot away from M. Meurice and myself; while these raps were resounding M. Meurice said he saw H. B., and remarked that he was pointing to the sign in question. M. Meurice then correctly localised the mark.

"Further, I told M. Meurice that he had made a mistake when speaking of a gold watch-chain and trinkets. The next vision my friend had of H. B., the latter showed himself with a black silk ribbon attached to his watch; this, I recognised as correct. H. B. always wore a black silk ribbon for a watch-chain.[1]

"In subsequent visions, H. B. showed the medium successively certain correct details in his costume, notably:—

"1. Cravats, dark blue with white spots.

"2. Shoes of a peculiar make, without heels and with elastic sides.

"3. White stockings.

"M. Meurice tells me he feels that H. B. very often tries to make himself visible to him; when he fails to do so, he hears him say impatiently: 'Thut! thut! thut!'—a curious coincidence, for this was a most characteristic habit of H. B.'s when impatient.

"From that time the personification H. B. has continued to mingle actively in our medium's life. His intervention is manifested daily. It would be impossible to give a full account of this personification's manifestations; I will simply confine myself to indicating the principal. It is to be pointed out, first of all, that H. B. appears literally to 'haunt' M. Meurice's house, especially the room above the latter's bedroom.[2]

"The phenomena are of several kinds:—

"*A.* Sonorous phenomena.

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[1] M. Meurice was aware of the fact that H. B. had bequeathed many things to Dr. Maxwell. He knew, for example, that the latter wears a watch which was given him by H. B. And as Dr. Maxwell also wears, attached to his watch, a gold chain and trinkets, normal mental activity might here have been at work.—*Note by the Translator.*

[2] M. Meurice's house bore the reputation of being haunted before he took it. He was unaware of this, until the neighbours told him of it some months after he was settled in the house.—*Note by the Translator.*

"1. Footsteps.

"(*a*) A loud, quick, decided footstep, which M. Meurice attributes to the personification Chappe.

"(*b*) An unequal step, as though one leg rested more heavily than the other; the imitation which M. Meurice made before me of this step recalled to my mind H. B.'s step.

"(*c*) A slow step as of a person who dragged his feet along: a movement attributed by M. Meurice to, and which I recognised as characteristic of, one of my deceased friends.[1]

"(*d*) A quick, light step, like the step of a big bird.

"These footsteps are heard in the corridor of the second story of the house; a story which is not inhabited. Then the door of a bedroom, immediately above M. Meurice's bedroom, seems to open and the footsteps resound in the room. M. Meurice has often got up—these noises occur at about two o'clock in the early morning—but he has never seen anything or any one.

"The same noises are also heard in M. Meurice's own bedroom.

"2. The opening of doors and windows.

"Before hearing footsteps in the bedroom on the second floor, M. Meurice hears the door of that room open. The noise of the opening of the door is always preceded by a noise similar to that made by a hand searching in the dark for the door handle.

"M. Meurice hears the same sounds on his bedroom door. There are three doors to M. Meurice's bedroom:

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[1] See page 160.

one leads into a dressing-room, one into a clothes-room, the third into a study; it is at this third door that the above-mentioned phenomena occur.

"Sometimes M. Meurice hears the window of his own bedroom, as well as that of the room upstairs, open and shut. He has got up repeatedly, and gone upstairs to see what was happening, but has always found the door closed, which he fancied he had heard being opened. Whenever, on returning to his bedroom, he left the door of the room upstairs open, the noise of footsteps would begin again as soon as he had left, but without the sound of the opening and shutting of the bedroom door.

"3. Noises as of furniture being moved about. The medium hears the chairs and tables of the room above him move about; his faculties of observation are well developed, and he believes he recognises:—

"(*a*) Accompanying the noise of the displacement of chairs and tables, Chappe's footstep.

"(*b*) H. B.'s footsteps, on the contrary, are accompanied by the noise a heavy person might make when sitting on a bed. The medium hears the mattress creaking.

"(*c*) Lastly, he hears a noise similar to what would be produced by a person lying back in an armchair.

"4. Noises of material objects other than furniture: these noises are like:—

"(*a*) A bag of corn or nuts emptied on to the floor of the bedroom upstairs.

"(*b*) Something hard striking the floor: these sounds are given rhythmically upon request.

"(*c*) Wings beating the air. M. Meurice compares these sounds to the flapping of the wings of a turkey.

"(*d*) The rubbing of paper.

"5. Diverse human noises:—

"(*a*) Sighs.

"(*b*) Heavy breathing.

"Are these sonorous phenomena subjective? I have never been in the house at the hour, when these sounds are said to be heard; and the noises I have heard from time to time are not sufficiently pronounced for me to be able to form any conclusion. I have assured myself that no water-pipes exist in the upper stories of the house; the latter is isolated, but any loud noises made in a neighbouring house can be heard in M. Meurice's house.

"No one sleeps in the second story. A domestic, who occupies a room on the same floor as M. Meurice, has heard the noise of footsteps, and has often got up out of bed and gone upstairs to see who was moving about. Never finding any one, the domestic attributes these sounds to rats: an insufficient explanation. Moreover, a close examination of the house, repeated on several occasions, has revealed to me no signs of rats.

"A sister of M. Meurice's frequently pays him visits; she then occupies a room on the same floor as her brother. On three different occasions she has been awakened out of sleep by sounds of footsteps, and a fumbling noise on the door of her room, as though some one were feeling for the handle. She has got up, gone into her brother's room, thinking it was he, searched about the house, but has never seen anything which could explain the noises, neither has she heard the noises while thus moving about.[1]

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[1] Among Dr. Maxwell's notes is the following account, written to Professor Richet, of a seance at which the doctor was present; and of some subsequent phenomena which he did *not* witness, but which the reader may consider interesting, nevertheless:—

19th March 1904.—'Yesterday afternoon I obtained some automatic writing with our medium. Chappe and H. B. were said to be communicating, and giving me their views about the war. We then used the commodious Chappe telephone—my stylograph on this occasion. The raps were excellent. The weather was good, fairly cold, but dry. When the last word of a message was being spelt out, Meurice suddenly threw away the pen and broke up the seance, without going through the usual formalities of good-bye. He rose up from his seat, complained of feeling dizzy, and fainted. He quickly came to, however, and when I left him he appeared quite well again. But soon after I had left the house, he went into his sister's room, and again fainted.

'Now, I had often told him not to break off the communications so abruptly. I think the fatigue he sometimes experiences after phenomena—fatigue often out of all proportion with them—is due to his *brusquerie*. On this occasion I am sure there was some link between him and the table on which the rapping occurred. Unfortunately, friendship mastered science, and I rose up instantly to look after my friend, without stopping to ascertain if there were any trace of exteriorised sensibility in the table. It is very probable that such was the case, because I repeatedly assured myself, during the course of the seance, that there was absolutely no sensibility whatever in the hand which was holding the stylograph—the rapping implement.

'During the seance Chappe had dictated that his medium was going to give "displacements of objects," and he bade him take heed thereof. M. Meurice's house is, this week, filled with visitors—his sister and her children among others. For want of room, he has taken his young nephew, a child of seven years old, into his room to sleep with him. Now, last night he was awakened towards midnight by his bed moving about. His sister, sleeping in the next room, also heard these noises; thinking her brother was ill, she got up and went into his room. She saw a curious sight: the bed was gliding, of its own accord, towards the window! She sat down on a sofa and watched; the room was lighted up by the light of one candle. The bed moved up to a table near the window, *i.e.* a distance of three feet; the carpet was not disturbed. The bed returned slowly to its former position. The child did not awaken. The sister is not aware of her brother's powers; if she were told, she would probably be much distressed, as she puts all such phenomena *a priori* down to charlatanry or to superstition. She was alarmed

"She has also heard the flapping of birds' wings, in the daytime, in different parts of the house.

"*B.* Phenomena of touch.

"M. Meurice sometimes feels a hand gently stroke him on the head. On one occasion, when he was suffering from a violent headache, he felt a hand move about on his head and forehead; the pain went away, and he fell asleep.

"*C.* Visual phenomena.

"Sonorous and tactile phenomena nearly always precede an apparition, which is generally that of H. B., either alone or with the Chappe personification.

"The following are a few examples of the visions relating to H. B.:—

"1. On the 31st October 1903 M. Meurice returned home from a visit to the neighbouring village—Arcachon, the same village, near which H. B. had appeared to him (p. 290). When he entered his bedroom, he perceived H. B. seated in a chair, holding on his arm a mortuary wreath made of black beads.

"On the morrow—All Souls' Day—M. Meurice related this vision to me. I was surprised—but concealed my surprise; for, as a matter of fact, I did not understand what a wreath of black beads could mean. At certain epochs I am in the habit of laying a wreath on H. B.'s tomb, but it is always composed of what were his favourite flowers. M. Meurice began to write automatically; he wrote: 'Bring me what you are in the

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at the manifestation, ascribed the movements to "ghosts," and firmly believes that the house is haunted.' (This sister does not live in Bordeaux, and has never been told of the reputation the house enjoyed before her brother took possession of it.)

habit of bringing me; the other wreath was for T. Bring him one too, for his family have almost forgotten him.' (I understood T. to be the initial letter of a great friend of H. B.'s.) My surprise did not diminish, because I know for a fact that T.'s family cherish his memory profoundly.

"However, following my usual custom, I treated the personification H. B. as he desired to be treated and executed his commission. I then made the following discovery: T. is buried in a vault over which lies a sort of platform. The vault belongs to his own family and the family of a near relation. There were fresh flowers on the side of the vault belonging to his relations; there were none on the side reserved for his family.

"I believe this circumstance, as well as the friendship which existed between H. B. and T., was unknown to M. Meurice; but I am obliged to admit that my belief rests upon no proof.

"Let me add, in order to finish at once with the T. incident, that, on the eve of my visit to T.'s tomb, I had asked M. Meurice to give me the Christian and surnames of the person about whom H. B. was supposed to be talking. The surname was given; a curious mistake was made before the Christian name was correctly given: the name of T.'s son was given, and then came T.'s own name. These indications were obtained in broad daylight, by means of raps without direct contact. The raps resounded upon a table on which I had placed a shawl, one corner of which was held by M. Meurice.

"2. A few days afterwards a seance was held in M. Meurice's bedroom. A portable cabinet had been used, which M. Meurice had not taken the trouble to remove before going to bed. During the night he was awakened by taps on the head; he heard diverse noises, and saw the door of the cabinet open. H. B. appeared, leaning on two of the 'fairies'; the two other 'fairies' followed. These personages presented the appearance of living people, said M. Meurice the next day when describing the vision to me. They rolled an armchair into the middle of the room; H. B. sat down in it; the *fairies* placed a shawl over his knees, and two of them sat down on the arms of his chair; the other two sat down on chairs. H. B. spoke about my health, and then bade M. Meurice tell me that I would be able to find all necessary documents on the history of religions in my cousin Y.'s library. The Christian names were correctly given, the surname approximately; but the approximation was such (the initial letter of the name being the only incorrect one) that I had no difficulty in recognising the name.

"It is exact that my cousin Y. possesses documents on the history of religions. M. Meurice knew that the question interested me; but it is extremely improbable, that he should have known of the existence of my cousin Y., who lives in the strictest seclusion; it is still more improbable, that he should have known the contents of his library. I cannot, however, affirm these two points, but I can at least affirm that M. Meurice does not know my cousin Y.

"The personification H. B. shows a spirit of fatherly protection towards M. Meurice; for example:—

"The medium was once out driving; a rather serious accident happened, in which his carriage was caught between a cart and a tram; the coachman was thrown from his seat and wounded. As the tram struck the carriage, M. Meurice felt himself seized by the arms, and carried out of the carriage on to the footpath by H. B.[1]

"The air of protection which this personification assumes is never absent; it is difficult, M. Meurice says, to convey an idea of the strange, fantastic impression which he feels, in presence of the frequent intervention of H. B., and other personifications.

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[1] The reader may care to see Dr. Maxwell's detailed report to Professor Richet of the above incident:—

'On Sunday morning Meurice was out driving. A short distance from Bordeaux his carriage collided with a milk-cart; the shafts of the latter crashed through one of the carriage windows. At the same time an electric tram, unable to pull up in time, struck the carriage in the rear. The coachman was thrown from his seat on to the ground, where he lay unconscious. He was wounded near the left eye, . . . his face was covered with blood.

'At the moment the collision with the tram took place, Meurice quickly opened the carriage door with the natural intention of jumping out; but he felt himself suddenly lifted up and carried on to the footpath, a distance of ten feet. He saw no one.

'He probably jumped of his own accord, and the sensation he experienced was but the symbolical expression of the solicitude the personifications show for him. The protector was supposed to be H. B.

'Now, on Saturday afternoon, the eve of the day on which the above accident occurred, I had a seance with my friend. We tried for luminous phenomena, but the experiment was null. Towards the close of the seance, Meurice said he saw the face of a dead man, with a wound on the left temple, the face was covered with blood. I asked who it was, and received by raps without contact: "Suicide, victime d'amour, Gaston"; the raps refused to give the surname. The aspect of the coachman's face after the accident the next morning somewhat recalls the aspect of the vision; if we accept this, there is a curious mixture of true and false, the false showing forth when our personal activity intervenes in order to question: a fact which I have often observed.

'The accident occurred between ten and a quarter past ten o'clock. My friend's youngest sister—a young girl of twenty—is paying him a visit this week. Now, this Sunday morning she went into the kitchen at ten o'clock, looking very distressed, and said to the servants that she felt sure an accident had happened to her brother. The sister's and servants' versions concorded absolutely when questioned a few hours later on this coincidence.'

"This impression is the less easily understood, in so much as M. Meurice is not a spiritualist, and has received a scientific education. He refuses to accept the explanations which the personifications offer of themselves : they claim to be human beings who have once lived on earth. Up to the present they have never pretended to give us any information touching the life beyond the tomb ; the indications they have given rather tend to direct our experiments, and to try to formulate premonitions. H. B. seems to have given himself the task, chiefly, of establishing his identity ; this desire appears to be his leading—I scarcely dare to say generating—idea. And we are obliged to admit that from this point of view he has given some curious details. These facts constitute the intellectual phenomena, which are the dominant ones in the H. B. personification, although raps and movements without contact are also said to emanate from him sometimes.

"I have given some examples of psycho-sensorial messages in the visions which I have described. These are far from being the most interesting. H. B. manifests also by automatic writing, and has given some messages of a highly interesting character in this manner. I cite the following as being the most characteristic :—

"On the 27th of November 1903, towards the close of a seance, I *mentally* asked H. B. where I happened to be, when he was laid up with a certain serious illness. The medium wrote : 'You were a young magistrate at Blaye, near Bordeaux.' M. Meurice knows what my career has been, but it is extremely improbable, he should have known about the illness—much less the time of the illness—of which I was thinking. At all events, the reply given to my *mental* question was correct. Neither the conversation nor previous facts could have given the slightest clue to my question. On another occasion, automatic writing made an extremely characteristic allusion to one of H. B.'s most inveterate habits: a glass of brandy and water every afternoon at half-past five, punctually.[1]

"Finally, on the occasion of the death of the last surviving member of his family, H. B. on the 5th of October 1904 wrote: 'Poor L., no one is left now. It is a consolation for you to feel me near you. . . . Very often those left behind cannot see us.' (*Pauvre L., il ne reste plus personne maintenant, c'est une consolation pour vous de me sentir près de vous. Souvent les survivants ne peuvent pas nous voir.*)

"This message was interesting because the last relative to die was not L. but C. L. died before C.; but L. had been H. B.'s favourite brother. It is quite correct that no one was left of H. B.'s generation after C.'s death.[2]

"At this same seance, H. B. mentioned a very private detail in connection with L. This fact, which *raisons de convenance* prevent me from fully relating, defines the nature of the intercourse which had existed between H. B. and his brother L. The circumstances which the writing recalled were known only to H. B. and a few near relations.

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[1] The following is Dr. Maxwell's detailed report of this incident as contained in a letter to Professor Richet:—

'. . . There was nothing we might say but twaddle in the writing which followed, *e.g.* expressions of pleasure on the part of H. B. in that he was able to communicate with me, his long efforts to reach me, etc., when suddenly, at 5.30, without any rhyme or reason, so to say, our medium wrote (always under the influence of the H. B. personification): "Offer me some brandy and water. . . ." Now, during fifty years H. B. had not been known to miss taking a glass of brandy and water every afternoon at half-past five. He was not in the habit of taking this concoction at other hours of the day; so that the coincidence is, to say the least, striking and curious. . . .'

[2] Neither L. nor C. have ever lived in Bordeaux. In fact H. B. was the only member of his family to leave his native land.

"I am fully aware that the above details have no demonstrative value, for I knew them all, and the hypothesis of thought transmission can explain them quite as well as the spirit hypothesis. Here is, however, a case which is less easily explained :—

"One of my friends is related to a lady, who lives with her husband in Paris. My friend told me that this cousin of his had amused herself one day with table-turning; and he added that the table had followed her without any one touching it. I had spoken of this incident to M. Meurice, but without mentioning names. The incident of the table following the novice the first time she had tried table-turning was the only thing mentioned.

"Quite recently, while pursuing my inquiry upon mediums' eyes, H. B., through automatic writing, told me that the afore-mentioned friend would be able to give me some information on the subject; the writing then named his cousin, but called her by her *maiden* name, giving the name correctly.

"Now two or three days afterwards, M. Meurice had a vision or a dream—often he cannot tell whether it be one or the other; he saw an aged lady sitting before a large table, on the top of which a doll's table was standing; two younger women were with her; one of these latter made the small doll's table turn round three times without touching it. The room in which these ladies were sitting was large, and M. Meurice thought it was in a country-house. The curtains were of rose-coloured velvet.

"The scene described was the one my friend had related to me, but I pointed out to M. Meurice that one detail at least was certainly incorrect: viz. the doll's table. H. B. immediately wrote: 'He has not made a mistake, it was the small table which moved, and not the large one.' (*Il ne se trompe pas, c'est bien le mouvement d'une petite table qui a eu lieu, et non celui d'une grande.*) I saw my friend the next day, and I related this incident to him. He assured me it was quite a mistake, that it was a large table, and not a doll's table, which had moved. I saw him again a few days later, when he told me he had made further inquiries about the table-turning incident, and had found out that it was indeed a doll's table placed upon the large table, which had effected the movements in question.

"The vision was therefore exact on this point; it was also exact concerning the number and age of the persons present, but the room in which the seance took place was in Paris and not in the country; the description of the room was incorrect.

"In this case, automatic writing confirmed the details seen hallucinatorily, or in dream; these details were most certainly unknown to M. Meurice as well as to myself. I will add that even had I mentioned my friend's name, which I can affirm I did not do, that name would have been of no assistance to M. Meurice, inasmuch as he does not know my friend, much less his cousin in Paris.

"This is the most precise case, in which M. Meurice has given me correct details unknown to myself.

"If we examine in a general manner the character of the H. B. personification, we are, perhaps, obliged to admit that it presents a spiritistic appearance. This appearance is all the more singular, in that it manifests in a centre where the spiritistic hypothesis is looked upon with disfavour. I am well aware of the fact, that tendencies opposed to those of the normal personality are often observed in secondary personalities.

"Young girls of a most timid and reserved disposition, normally, sometimes show obscene parasitic personalities, under the influence of which they give utterance to the most filthy language, and perform most indecent acts. The processes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are most instructive from this point of view, especially those of Loudun and Louviers. It is not surprising, therefore, to see personifications calling themselves spirits emerge in a non-spiritistic centre; it is probably a phenomenon comparable to that of the secondary personalities just spoken of. A different synthesis of psychological elements is formed, which follows an opposite bent to the one normally followed. It is as though the poles were changed, and a secondary personality reveals itself as the very reverse of the first personality.

"The interesting point to seek for, however, is not the genesis of the personification, for there are so many hypotheses which might explain it, but to determine which explanation concerning the personification best suits the particular circumstances.

"My observations upon the H. B. personification—the most thorough I have so far been able to make—do not permit me to form a definite conclusion; at the same time, they do not tend to make me look favourably upon the spirit hypothesis. If we resume the details given by H. B.:—

"*A.* About himself, his person, we find:

"1. 2. Two ways of wearing his beard.
"3. A peculiar mark near the eye.
"4. 5. A very peculiar walk: right leg shorter than the left.
"6. The hair was fairly well described.
"7. The eyes were not well described.

"*B.* Details about his clothes and habits:

"8. An unusual shape of slipper.
"9. The shape and colour of his cravats.
"10. His walking-stick.
"11. The manner in which he passed the last six years of his life in an armchair.
"12. The shawl which habitually covered his legs.
"13. His habit of taking a glass of brandy and water every afternoon at 5.30.
"14. His allusions to his brother L. and to his death.
"15. A gold chain and pendants which he never possessed: followed, however, by the rectification of the error.
"16. The detail of the *Temps*.

"That is to say: two inexact, two doubtful, and twelve accurate details.

"It may be of interest to draw attention to the process employed by this personification to prove his identity; it is worthy of some attention, because it touches on precise details. Those particular signs which are of capital importance in the identification of persons, we find in details 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 13, 14, and it would be most unjust to refuse to recognise in these indications at least an appearance of volition and intelligence.

"The character of volition has been decidedly indicated. The H. B. personification began to manifest itself by giving details concerning his physical appearance and his habits. When M. Meurice saw H. B., he frequently perceived the apparition very indistinctly, with the exception of the particular point which the personification appeared to be desirous of impressing upon him; this occurred particularly with details 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, and for the rectification of the watch-chain incident—15.

"The character of intelligence has not been less marked than the character of volition. The personification gives the impression of having deliberately chosen the signs, by which he desired to prove his identity. Everybody knows how difficult it is to recognise such or such a person by the mere description of features; definite details and peculiar marks are, on the contrary, of the greatest value for purposes of identification: and these are precisely the details which H. B. *seems* to have chosen; these are the kind of details he *seems* to have shown with the greatest persistence.

"Such facts as these plead in favour of the spirit hypothesis; it would be unfair to deny it.

"In the first place, there are some inaccuracies, *e.g.* 15. Can we attribute this to the iconogenical activity of the medium? This is the theory which Dr. Hodgson has so finely developed, and the arguments he appeals to are very serious. The sensorial or motor message is due either to the medium himself, or to an intelligence distinct from that of the medium, or to the combined action of the two intelligences. Notwithstanding Dr. Hodgson's weighty arguments, this explanation can only be considered, at present, as a working hypothesis. It is rather difficult to understand why an extraneous intelligence could give twelve accurate details, and make a mistake in two or three other important details; it is still more difficult to understand, if the identity in question be present, why he should commit such mistakes; and it seems to me that the personal action of the medium explains these errors even less satisfactorily.

"Nevertheless, we must admit that even if we accept the hypothesis of the personal action of the medium troubling the extrinsical action of a foreign intelligence, this simultaneous blending of true and false details is little made to bring about a conviction of the intervention of an active intelligence, other than that of the medium.

"Finally, even in admitting as proven the intervention of an intelligence non-human, nothing permits us to affirm that it is really the person in question who is manifesting and not an impersonation. This distinction has been well put forward by theologians, though the rules they give for the discernment of spirits appear to us to be most puerile.

"To sum up, the case of H. B. has an appearance which is, frankly speaking, spiritistic; but it is not possible to consider as certain, or even as probable, the pretensions manifested by this interesting personification."

SERIES B

A. RAPS

I propose gathering together, for the first part of this series, a few interesting things scattered here and there among the notes before me.

On one occasion Chappe dictated by means of raps without contact—in broad daylight—that 760 copies of a work of Dr. Maxwell's had been sold. Four days later, in the same manner, he said that 958 copies of the said work had been sold; incorrect information as the following proves: the day after the seance in which Chappe had announced the sale of 958 copies, Dr. Maxwell received a letter from the publisher of the work in question telling him that 800 copies had left him, including the press service.

. . . . . .

"We had some good phenomena on Tuesday afternoon," writes Dr. Maxwell. "I was talking to M. Meurice about my bibliographical researches, and of the best plan to adopt for the analytical indexes. A small mahogany table was near us, one leg of the table was touching a rug on which M. Meurice was sitting. Raps resounded on the table; Chappe's signal was given, followed by some advice concerning the subject of our conversation. Telekinetic phenomena were also forthcoming—the table gliding towards us and then away from us according to request, travelling a distance of from three to five inches.

"Then I tried an experiment, one I have been wishing to try for some time: I bade M. Meurice sit in an armchair and lie perfectly still. I placed his arm at about one foot from the table, and told him to *fancy* he lifted his arm and struck the table, without, of course, making the slightest movement.

"We obtained some excellent raps in this way. This is a fine experiment, for it shows clearly the production of raps by the will—the direct, conscious and personal will.

"We tried three series of experiments; six raps in each series were willed; we received four raps in each, that is to say, 66 per cent. of success. The raps were loud, one was double. The medium nearly fainted after this experiment, but came round quickly, though he has not been well since.

"His sensations were: (1) absence of sensation in the arm with which we were experimenting; (2) a kind of breeze issuing from his shoulder. After willing the raps he was never sure of success, he did not feel the wood had been touched. Sensibility appeared to be exteriorised."

. . . . . .

In another of Dr. Maxwell's letters we note the following:—

"For our seance yesterday we obtained, as usual, a quantity of raps through the lead-pencil. I succeeded in provoking them upon myself. Sensation produced: when M. Meurice put the pencil on bone I had a sensation of a slight electric current; it produced no contractions in the muscles traversed; the sensation was at its maximum on bone, probably because of the greater conductibility offered by solids to vibration.

"I have tried the raps upon several substances with the following result:—

the finger: good.
wood: very good, maximum.
ivory: good.
iron: bad.

"Sensibility appears to be exteriorised during the production of raps through a pencil. Yesterday there was sensibility at a distance of four centimetres from the periphery of the hand, which was holding the pencil, when the raps were forthcoming.

"I asked Chappe to indicate in one word why it was easier to obtain raps with a lead-pencil. He dictated the answer, '*Localisent.*'

"Before we separated we received the following message by raps *without contact*: '*Jeanne Bordes morte* 7 *octobre* 1859 *à St. Pierre Martinique, demeurant* 37 *rue St. Jacques.*' I do not know of any Jeanne Bordes, though a family of that name lives at St. Pierre. I have questioned some people who have lived in that town, but they do not recollect any Jeanne Bordes. . . ."

In another letter the doctor writes:—

"Towards four o'clock this afternoon, in broad daylight, some very fine raps resounded on a table standing thirteen feet away from M. Meurice and myself. It was said to be H. B. who was rapping. M. Meurice became nervous, and the experiment only lasted for five minutes. It was magnificent as an example of raps at a distance."

. . . . . .

The following extracts are taken from Dr. X.'s notes:—

"On one occasion Professor Richet and I were speaking about a relation of the professor's, A. R., who was supposed to have communicated with him through M. Meurice. The latter could not have overheard our conversation, for the simple reason that he was at least ten miles away from where we happened to be at that moment. Five or six hours afterwards, when Professor Richet was out walking with M. Meurice, raps suddenly resounded on the latter's walking-stick, and the following words were dictated: '*Suis avec vous.*' (Who are you?) '*A. R. Je ne vous ai jamais abandonné.*'

"In the course of the morning's conversation, the remark had been passed that the persistency of this personification's manifestations would be looked upon by some as a sign of survival, and I had made use of the words: 'I wonder if he—A. R.—has been near you lately.'

. . . . . .

"The medium was aware of certain experiments I had made with a sensitive at Nancy. He often heard me discuss with Professor Richet and Dr. Maxwell, the phenomena I witnessed there. One day, in presence of Professor Richet and myself, Chappe dictated that he followed me about sometimes, upon which I said: 'Were you with me in Nancy?' He replied (by means of raps *without* contact): '*Oui. D. s'attire des ennuis en groupant autour de lui des influences inférieures. Défiez-vous de la domestique. Fraude. Il y a eu autrefois un fort médium, Henri Dubuc, à Nancy. S. n'est pas un médium à matérialisations.*'

"This communication was given in broad daylight, by means of raps without any contact whatsoever. The raps resounded on a table which was standing near, but which was not touched, either directly or indirectly, by the medium. From time to time Professor Richet and I leant on the table, but not with a view to aiding the phenomena—I mean to furnishing 'force.' Our touching the table or not seemed to make no difference to the rapping intelligence. The message was dictated with precision and rapidity.

"It is to be noted, that M. Meurice held a decided opinion concerning the experiments at Nancy; he was not at all inclined to admit their authenticity. The group, at whose seances I had been permitted to be present, know of no Henry Dubuc.

"While the preceding communication was being given, one of the observers made the remark, *sotto voce*, that he had a headache, and wondered if Chappe could suggest a remedy: immediately the somewhat laconic reply, '*Dormez*,' was rapped out."

. . . . . .

The following message contains an incident of a certain interest, if the reader will kindly compare it with the efforts, related in Series C, page 359, to obtain a particular name.

"A letter had been received from Professor Richet, in which reference had been made to a curious occurrence at Carqueiranne, very much like an orthodox haunting. During lunch, I spoke about this to the medium. As often happened when the conversation turned on these grounds, raps mingled freely with our conversation. Thereupon I asked who was rapping, and received the reply that C. R. (Professor Richet's grandfather) was present; whereupon the following conversation between this personification and myself took place:—

"Question: Can you explain the haunting at Carqueiranne?

"C. R.: *Oui.*

"Question: Who is it who haunts the place?

"C. R.: *Mère.*

"Question: Whose mother?

"C. R.: Grandmother Jacques.
Mère Charles.

"(Jacques is the name of the boy to whom the incident in question occurred.)

"Question: What is her name?

"C. R.: *Eugénie.*

"This name 'Eugénie' is the one we had tried in vain to obtain four months previously.[1] It was now given without any hesitation whatsoever, by raps without contact.

"Following this word 'Eugénie,' the raps predicted the death of one of my brothers in a month's time from an automobile accident. The prediction, happily, remains unfulfilled. When this message was received, I did not know if my brother ever rode in motor cars; and, for several reasons, I did not consider it at all likely; but three weeks afterwards, I had a letter from him asking me to procure him several catalogues, as he had the intention of buying a motor car. My brother lives in California. The medium knew I had relations in California, but did not know about my brother, much less his name."

In the following messages, the raps were obtained with and without contact.

"I had been anxious about my youngest brother, and had openly spoken of my anxiety, saying I had reason to fear that my brother and his tutor did not get on well together. One evening, during dinner, Chappe rapped out the signal intimating his presence; the raps resounded on the table close to where I was sitting, and at a distance of about three feet from the medium. Asked if he had anything to say, Chappe dictated: *Il faut laisser le petit en repos loin de son tuteur.* I wish to draw attention to the last word, for it marks a curious error. When speaking to the medium of my brother, I always made use of the word *tuteur*, whereas, in French, I should have said *précepteur.* The two words have quite a different meaning; my brother was not with a *tuteur* in the French sense of the word, but with a *précepteur*.

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[1] See page 359.

"Now, a short time before, my brother had shown symptoms of a cardiac affection, and was undergoing a special treatment. Neither the medium nor Dr. Maxwell knew of this; they thought my brother was in the best of health, as indeed he appeared to be.

"After the last communication had been received, I asked Chappe if my brother's health was good. My question was: *Est-ce que sa santé est bonne?* The answer came: *Arythmie du cœur; séparez-le de son tuteur.*

"At the time, I myself did not know the precise nature of the weakness. I simply knew that my brother had had two attacks of spasms of the heart; but, I repeat, I had not mentioned this fact to any one. A fortnight after receiving the foregoing communication, I had a letter from the doctor charged to watch over my brother, in which letter the term 'arythmie' was employed for the first time, in connection with him.

"My family thought of sending my brother to the Pyrenees for a few months' rest and change. I asked Chappe if he could tell me what was contemplated; he replied: *Peut-être ferez-vous bien de garaer Raoul auprès de vous; dans deux mois, Paris, campagne, Hyères, Ile, Arcachon*; all so many efforts, one would say, to read my thoughts—but without success.

. . . . . .

"A seance had been arranged for at which Dr. Maxwell, Professor Richet and I were to be present. Much had been expected from this seance, for there were many signs of ample force. The raps were certainly excellent, and, with a great show of dignity, asked: *Permettez-vous à un ami de* (mentioning my name) *de venir?* Permission being given, it was announced that "Georges R." wished to speak with me.

"I know of no Georges R.; the medium, however, was aware of the fact that R. is one of my family names.

"The raps ('Georges R.') continued: *Votre père a eu un accident de voiture; foie très contusionné; soaisr chute; (soir sa chute?)*.

"No accident of any kind has happened to my father either at the time of receiving the above message, or since.

"The rapping ceased abruptly, when this last message was given, and no further phenomena occurred at this particular seance.

. . . . . .

"At a short seance at which Dr. Maxwell and I were present, the medium said he could see Chappe walking about the room with a lady on his arm; the lady was dressed in mourning. Raps accompanied the medium's words and, the name of the lady in mourning being asked for, the word 'Marguerite' was dictated. Asked why she was in mourning, the raps replied that it was for identity's sake, because 'Marguerite' was in mourning when she died. (*Signe identité—en deuil quand elle est morte.*) Asked for the name of the person for whom Marguerite was in mourning, when she died, the raps replied: 'Katey.'

"Now, a favourite aunt of mine died a few years ago, whose name was Marguerite. My mother died a few weeks before my aunt; consequently my aunt was in mourning for my mother, when she died. My mother's name was Kate, but my aunt always called her Katey.

"I can affirm never having spoken of these details either to Dr. Maxwell or to the medium.

"During this seance it was Dr. Maxwell who spelt out the alphabet."

. . . . . .

I will give one more quotation from Dr. X.'s notes:—

"Chappe was rapping so noisily and abundantly one morning that, in default of other phenomena being forthcoming, I asked him if he would kindly tell me what was man's occupation after death. My exact question was: *Qu'est-ce qu'on fait dans l'Au delà?* Very quickly and unhesitatingly the raps answered: *On est dans ravissement profond, et occupé uniquement de faire le bonheur de tous ceux qui sont chers et le souci d'apporter des preuves d'une vie future.*"

. . . . . .

In the exposition of the few facts in this, as well as in the other series, we are trying to throw every light in our power upon the agency operating behind these messages.

This necessitates personal details here and there which, we hope, the reader will forgive. On every occasion, unless the reverse has been stated, M. Meurice was thoroughly wide-awake. It was often he who spelt out the alphabet, especially when the observers had reason to suspect a name—or the nature of the message to be given. He always permitted a constant and careful scrutiny of his every movement, when the raps were produced with contact. When raps were forthcoming without contact, they were given wherever requested, *e.g.* on a chair, the floor, the centre of the table or under such or such an observer's hand; in these cases the vibration was easily perceived. When the pencil was used, care was taken—by holding M. Meurice's hand and the pencil—to make sure of the fact that neither hand nor pencil stirred, while the raps were being produced.

There can be no doubt whatever of the authenticity of the raps, which gave the messages laid before the reader in this chapter.

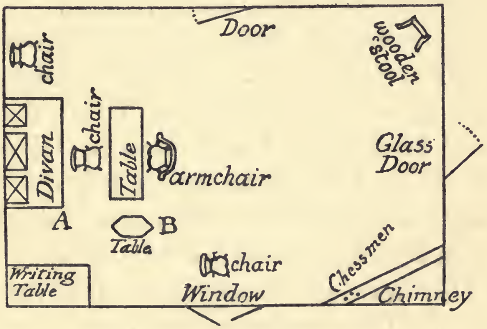
All things considered, the chances seem great that these raps are not accidental, but significant of some fact in the complex and obscure structure of human personality—dare we say in the structure even of the Cosmos?

B. TELEKINETIC PHENOMENA

The following is Dr. Maxwell's *compte rendu* of some telekinetic phenomena, which were forthcoming on the 25th and 26th July 1903. These notes were written immediately after the phenomena occurred.

"*25th July* 1903; 4.30 P.M.

"M. Meurice and I were working in a small study in the former's house. The room is about eight feet long by eight feet wide. On the NE. side is a window; SW. a door; NW. a glass door. The window was closed, and the shutters were half closed on account of the excessive heat and glaring light. The furniture consists of: a writing-table in the E. corner; a divan against the NE. wall; a low chair in the S. corner; a rectangular table in front of the couch or divan; a small hexagonal table near the rectangular table; a gilt cane chair in front of the window; a wooden stool in the W. corner; a chimney-piece in the N. corner; an armchair in front of the rectangular table; a small gilt chair was between the latter table and the divan. It was drawn under the table.



"M. Meurice and I had been writing (correcting proof sheets) on the hexagonal table. M. Meurice was sitting on the edge *A* of the divan, I was at *B* opposite him, when raps were heard on the writing-table—with which M. Meurice had no contact. I measured a distance of two feet between him and the writing-table.

At the same time, raps in quantity, but of feeble tonality, resounded on the hexagonal table.

"We removed our writing materials on to the rectangular table, for the sake of more room. The raps gradually ceased; they died out altogether on the writing-table and began, though very feebly, to resound on the rectangular table. We worked for an hour and then rested a while. M. Meurice sat back on the couch, putting one of his feet on the chair between the divan and the table. Raps immediately resounded on the chair. I went and sat down beside my friend, and observed that the raps *appeared* to come from his foot; I found that they were synchronous with our movements; they also responded correctly to my mental and spoken request.

"I left the couch and sat on the armchair in front of the rectangular table. M. Meurice drew his legs under him and sat on the divan, tailor-fashion. We decided to try to move the gilt chair standing between the divan and the table. There was a space of fourteen inches between the divan and the chair. I sat on the armchair. M. Meurice brought his hands towards the chair, palms facing the chair; he kept his hands still at a distance of seven to eight inches from the back of the chair; I stretched out my arms above the table towards the chair. When I contracted my muscles, the arms and hands extended, the chair moved. The amplitude of the movement was very small, scarcely a quarter of an inch, but the movement was abrupt and decided. It was a jerk, which took place shortly after the muscular contraction.

"This movement was reproduced three times under the same conditions.

"Then M. Meurice and I changed places. I sat on the couch in the same way as he had sat; M. Meurice made the same movements I had made. The chair moved twice; the amplitude of the movement was much greater than with me; the chair was displaced an inch each time. After the second movement was produced, M. Meurice said he felt tired; he lifted his arms above his head and stretched himself; that is to say, he pulled himself upwards; his feet did not go near the table. While stretching himself, the chair suddenly—for the third time—displaced itself a distance of an inch. The latter movement coincided with the extension of the back, at the moment when the muscles of the grooves and *lombo-sacré* contracted.

"The direction of these movements was from the table towards the couch; the chair receded from the table, whether M. Meurice or I sat on the couch.

"Seeing how easily these movements without contact were being obtained, we went downstairs into the dining-room with the object of trying to obtain some phenomena, which M. Meurice had obtained when alone the previous day; namely, the attraction of wine-glasses.

"I took a liqueur-glass, and put it on the mantelpiece in the dining-room. M. Meurice made some passes around the glass, then put his two hands together meeting them at the finger-tips; he drew his hands slowly away, the glass followed his hands by jerks.

"We then returned to the study. I sat down on the divan and prepared to resume my writing. M. Meurice was standing near the mantelpiece. In a few minutes I heard him say he was attracting the chessmen. I got up and watched carefully. His hands were in the position described above in connection with the liqueur-glass; he drew his hands slowly backwards, and the red king followed his hands; this tiny piece is about half an inch in height and a quarter of an inch in diameter. The movement was slow and gliding. M. Meurice tried to reproduce the phenomena but failed. He said he was tired and would rest a while. In a few minutes he renewed his efforts. I stood close beside him; again failure. After a few more minutes of rest, he tried again—I watching him closely all the while—and, this time, succeeded in attracting the same piece—the red king. The piece followed the direction of his fingers, as before, slowly and smoothly.

"M. Meurice again complained of feeling tired, and I urged him not to try for any more phenomena, but to lie down and rest. I went to my writing once more, but M. Meurice was restless, and told me he wanted to try to move an empty beer-bottle, which was standing on the mantelpiece.

"He took it from the mantelpiece and put it on the wooden stool. He knelt down in front of the stool, and made the same manœuvres with his hands as for the liqueur-glass and the chessman. I remained sitting on the divan, a distance of nearly seven feet from the stool. M. Meurice, after the above-mentioned manœuvres, *i.e.* passing his hands several times round the bottle, joined his hands together at the finger-tips, and drew them gently backwards as before. The bottle moved four times, each time from two to three inches.

"M. Meurice then said he felt sea-sick; and he was obliged to lie down for a while. He soon rose up, however, and said he wanted to make something else move. He took a piece of sealing-wax, tried several times, but failed to move it. Thereupon I persuaded him to cease making further attempts."

"*26th July.*

"Phenomena of attraction similar to yesterday, occurred this afternoon. We were in M. Meurice's bedroom. It was four o'clock, the window was open, the shutters were ajar; the light was excellent.

"The mantelpiece is covered with plush. On one corner there is a statuette in porcelain representing the Thorn; the child is seated on a chair, and is pulling a thorn out of his foot; the statuette is five inches high. M. Meurice told me that he was going to make this statuette move. I stood near him, with one hand on his back; I stooped down, and looked fixedly and narrowly at the statuette during the whole operation. M. Meurice proceeded exactly as in the preceding experiments, and when his hands—joined together at the finger-tips—were at a distance of six inches from the statuette, the latter swayed, bent slowly forward, and fell over. I affirm most positively, that there was no hair or thread or normal link of any kind whatsoever between the statuette and the medium's hands. I passed my hand all round the statuette, before the movement, during the movement, and after the movement; I thus verified by touch, what my eyes were witnessing.

"Now, after M. Meurice had made some passes with his hands around the statuette (without touching it, be it remembered), and when, after putting his hands together at the finger-tips, he slowly withdrew them, I heard a slight noise, like the rubbing of a hair on the statuette; at the *same* time the latter swayed; this creaking sound did not continue, and only accompanied the first movements of the statuette. Again I affirm, that there was no hair or thread whatsoever connecting the medium's hands with the statuette.

"After the production of this phenomenon, we decided to have a dark seance, for the purpose of trying to obtain luminous phenomena. I closed the shutters and pulled down a dark blind, especially constructed for dark seances. While I was doing this, M. Meurice continued trying to attract various articles on the chimney-piece. Seeing this I drew the dark blind away again and let in more light, in order to be able to see clearly. I took a stick of sealing-wax, broke off a piece and put it on a small mirror, which was lying on the mantelpiece. In this case M. Meurice did not make any preliminary passes as with the statuette, beer-bottle and liqueur-glass; he simply joined his hands together in front of the sealing-wax; the sealing-wax followed his hands several times, in fact every backward movement drew the wax after the hands; he finally drew the sealing-wax to the edge of the mantelpiece, when it fell to the floor.

"The seance which followed was unproductive. A few raps were heard, but that was all. After the seance, we lighted up the room, opened the window, and M. Meurice again tried to move the sealing-wax. He succeeded with great facility, the sealing-wax following every movement of his fingers.

"By sight and touch, I assured myself of the absence of any link between the wax and M. Meurice's hands. I solemnly affirm that no such link of any kind existed.

"I desired to write a letter, and, thinking that the phenomena were probably exhausted for the time being, I begged M. Meurice to allow me to get off my letter. I was in the act of writing, when he said he felt he could move another article. I watched him: he took up another statuette, which stands a foot high; he put this statuette on a small table which was near me; he kept his hands open, palms turned towards the object in question. He moved his hands slowly backwards and forwards, and I observed the statuette bend forward when his hands receded, and bend backwards when his hands approached it. His hands were never nearer than ten inches to the object.

"M. Meurice then complained of feeling unwell, and threw himself on his bed. His hands touched the head of the bed, on the woodwork of which raps at once resounded. Chappe gave his signal, and dictated: 'B. MENAGEZ.' Questioned as to what he meant, he said to take care of the medium, and not to take advantage of the power. We ceased experimenting, therefore.

"I have a few remarks to make concerning the above phenomena. When I held my friend's hands, I obtained nothing. M. Meurice says he saw a thread, or rather a sheath of filaments, pass from his fingers on to the object of experimentation. As a rule, he made passes over the object he wished to move, as though he were putting a thread of some kind around it. He did not always do this, *e.g.* if the object to be moved were light and small, he made no passes over it.

"This movement would be very suspicious, if observation were superficial; but apart from the purely scientific spirit in which M. Meurice views his own phenomena, the severe control I exercised demonstrated the absence of any material link whatever."

More Extracts from Dr. Maxwell's Notes

"*3rd June* 1903.

"A movement without contact was forthcoming this afternoon. I placed a table upside down upon a linen sheet. M. Meurice and I put our hands on the sheet, some distance away from the table. The latter turned completely over; the movement was performed slowly and gently. It was at four o'clock, the sunlight was streaming in through the open window.

"We also obtained the movement of a heavy wooden stool with slight contact. M. Meurice and I were sitting on a couch, the stool was near us; abundant raps were heard on the stool. M. Meurice took up a piece of linen, put one end on the stool, putting a framed picture on top of it to keep it in place; he put the other end on his knees. In a few minutes, the stool swayed about and finally moved a distance of three inches away from M. Meurice. I watched him well and can affirm he moved neither hand nor foot during the production of this phenomena.

"M. Meurice experienced much fatigue after this movement. It occurred at half-past four; the light, I repeat, was excellent."

"*11th June* 1903.

"It appears that M. Meurice attracted several objects —pieces of bread, forks, etc.—yesterday during lunch.

But he could not reproduce the phenomena in my presence. We had, however, raps and numerous slight movements without contact—raps almost *ad libitum*. Automatic writing followed, but contained nothing of interest; it was impossible to obtain replies to mental questions: subjectivity.

"*P.S.*—I am adding a postscript to my letter from the medium's house; for we have just received some fine phenomena. The raps were, as usual, very abundant; but we also received two fine series of parakinetic movements.

"1. I brought a small mahogany table up to the sofa on which M. Meurice had thrown himself. I sat down beside him, taking a shawl which I threw over him and the table. Instantly, raps resounded on the table. M. Meurice could not possibly have touched the table without my noticing it.

"The table swayed about, now on this side, now on that; and then dragged itself towards me by jerks, first one side, then the other. When I squeezed M. Meurice's hand or gave him a slight tap on the shoulder, there was a synchronous movement in the table. The latter also moved in response to request. Then it gently raised itself up on the two feet which were nearest to me; this side lost contact with the floor and rose to a height of four inches.

"2. We were both carefully watching this interesting phenomenon, when I heard raps on another table which was about a foot away from the sofa and two feet away from the table with which we were experimenting. This second table had no contact whatsoever either with the sofa or with the shawl: it was isolated. Hearing the raps, I looked at the table and saw it rise up, or to be more correct, sway about—only three of its legs touching the ground. M. Meurice had not noticed this phenomenon; when I drew his attention to it, he became suddenly nervous, and complained of feeling tired. I pointed out to him how much this sensation of fatigue was subjective and out of all proportion with the energy expended. But new or unexpected phenomena always upset him; he experiences a sort of anguish blended with something like fear in presence of a new phenomenon.

"These movements of the second table lasted for several minutes; they were synchronous with our own movements and muscular contractions, but were also forthcoming at request. We were operating in broad daylight. Chappe informed us, by raps, that he was the operator on this occasion."

"*11th July* 1904.

"I was obliged to make an early call on our medium this morning. Lucky visit! for he was in a working mood and gave two fine movements without contact. We began by sitting at a table, where we received raps by means of the lead-pencil; the words: *Put yourselves against the daylight* were rapped out. We did not understand what this meant, and ceased experimenting. We went downstairs and walked about in the garden for a few minutes. When we went back to the study, we resumed our seance. M. Meurice sat down on the divan and I in front of him. Raps without contact dictated: *Lie down for a while, we want to try for a physical effect.*

"The raps directed that I was to lie down on the sofa and M. Meurice was to take my place. We followed these directions.

"M. Meurice said he felt 'queer'; that his hands seemed to be full of hair, or rather of spider's web, and he tried to rub the feeling away. I got up and took down from the mantelpiece the statuette of St. John, the history of which you know.[1] He tried to attract it, but without results. We waited, the spider's web sensation returned, and this time I prevented him from rubbing it off; he drew his hands together over and then in front of the statuette and—his fingers at a distance of five inches from the object—attracted it to him. The statuette moved two inches.

"M. Meurice felt ill after this movement, and was obliged to lie down for a while. He soon got up, and tried again. But I stopped him, fearing he might over-tire himself; though the statuette did not move forward this time, it swayed about."

"*18th July* 1904.

"On Thursday morning, M. Meurice again succeeded in attracting the statuette of St. John. He told me he felt the cobwebby sensation, which—in his case—coincides with telekinetic phenomena; he took the statuette in question and placed it on a table. He then proceeded as though he were putting something behind the object, making several passes with his hands all round it. As he was drawing his hands away from the statuette—they had reached a distance of nine inches—I heard something like the crackling of a hair or silken thread on the wood of the statuette, and then the latter moved.

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[1] "Concerning the statuette: the medium was—two months previous to the seance here spoken of—given the catalogue of a sale of antiquities to be held at Bordeaux. When going to bed he took the catalogue to glance over it; but he says he was so sleepy, that he did not get any further than the first page. In the night, he dreamt that he was to buy No. 256 in the catalogue, which—he was told in his dream—was the Christ of whom he had seen the vision a few months previously, when Madame Stephens was with us. (See Series C, page 349.)

"When the medium awakened, he looked up No. 256, and found that it was an ancient wooden statuette of St. John the Baptist."—*Note by Dr. X.*

"The excellent conditions of light under which the experiment took place, the control of sight and touch which I most carefully exercised, the proximity of the statuette to my eyes, all this renders the absence of any hair or thread most certain for me. This is the second time I have heard this scraping sound.

"M. Meurice was extremely fatigued after the production of this phenomenon, and fainted. On recovering himself, he insisted on trying once more, and succeeded in making the statuette sway about.

"The day following this experience, he attracted several small articles—wine-glasses, bread, etc.—near his reach on the luncheon-table. I was not present, however.

"You perceive how very suspicious the phenomena sometimes *appear* to be. Nothing short of actual observation could demonstrate the absence of a connecting link of some kind between the medium's hands and the object in movement."

C. LUMINOUS PHENOMENA

By Dr. X.

"For about eighteen months, Dr. Maxwell has been endeavouring to turn the phenomena in the direction of luminosities or materialisations.

"With that object in view, he has had a light portable cabinet constructed. This fragile apparatus consists of eight pieces of pinewood fitting into one another by means of hooks. When put together, there is just enough space inside the cabinet to allow of the introduction of a small, straight-backed chair; a person sitting thereon, finds himself in contact with the back and sides of the cabinet, and his knees against the door. A large curtain of purple cloth has been made, which is thrown over the cabinet, covering it completely. The curtain is buttoned over the door.

"The luminous phenomena already obtained with this medium and spoken of by Dr. Maxwell on pages 152-5, were sufficient grounds for hoping that patience and perseverance might, finally, obtain happy results capable of being repeated.

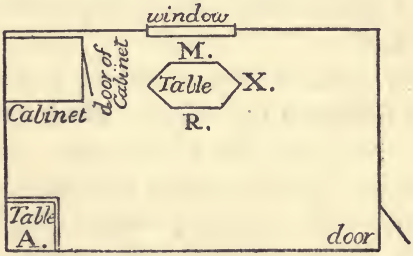
"For more than a year nothing demonstratively objective was forthcoming. In the darkness, one often imagined one could see clouds of vapour moving about near the cabinet; but there was nothing to prove that this appearance was anything more than an optical illusion. On these occasions, the medium frequently complained of a disagreeable sensation on his hands and face, as though he were caught in a spider's web. He has also said, that he perceived from time to time an odour of phosphorus or ozone in the cabinet; the medium has been the only one of the experimenters to notice this odour, so far.

"Whenever I have been present at these attempts, I have observed that they were accompanied by complete cessation of all other phenomena, such as visions, raps, telekinesis. Until November 1904, this apparently negative result was about all that was obtained at these dark seances.

"During the first week in November, the medium being in good form, and the 'force' abundant, it was decided to devote a few days, which Professor Richet was able to dispose of, to an effort to obtain luminous phenomena.

"Three seances in all were held. There were present, Professor Richet, Dr. Maxwell, M. Meurice, and myself. The seances were held in a very small room on the top floor of the medium's house.

"The following is a diagram showing the disposition of the room in which the three seances, of which I am giving the *compte rendu*, took place.



"The door, which was shut, leads into another room, the two doors of which—leading into a corridor—were locked during the experiment. The window and shutters of this adjoining room were closed, and the room darkened, so that no light therefrom could penetrate under the door of the seance-room.

"The seances were held between 5 and 6.30 o'clock in the afternoon. Total darkness was obtained by closing the outside shutters and the window, and by hanging a large black curtain—kept for the purpose—across the window. No ray of light was visible on the sides of the window; the position of the latter could be guessed at during the seance—simply because we knew where it was—but could not be perceived. The darkness was profound. A candle and box of matches were placed on table *A*. When the experimenters were seated, the candle was blown out.

"*Results.*—Tuesday, 1st November 1904. The four experimenters were seated around the table (see diagram); the medium (who is not marked on the diagram, because he was in the cabinet whenever phenomena were forthcoming) was seated between Dr. Maxwell (*M*) and Professor Richet (*R*), with his back to the cabinet: No results—nothing whatever—neither raps nor anything else.

"The medium goes into the cabinet. After an interval of a quarter of an hour, *M* and *X* think they see milky-looking clouds floating about near the cabinet, but they are unable to affirm the objectivity of this appearance. At the close of the seance, feeble raps are heard on the table; the raps dictate that Professor Richet is to sit in the cabinet on the following day."

. . . . . .

Second Seance

"*Wednesday, 2nd November* 1904.

"Professor Richet sits in the cabinet. The medium sits at the spot marked *M* on the diagram; Dr. Maxwell sits at *R*. After sitting in this way for a quarter of an hour—during which time nothing occurred—the medium asked to be allowed to go into the cabinet. Professor Richet then sits at *R*, and Dr. Maxwell at *M*. Almost immediately *M* and *X* see a phosphorescent, milky-looking, amorphous light, of about six inches in diameter in parts, floating about outside the door of the cabinet. It was decidedly objective, lasted for about one minute, and gradually disappeared.

" *R* did not see the light.

"[From an experiment made on the following day, we have all three reason to believe, that Professor Richet did not see the luminosities at this seance because of his position. Let it be borne in mind that *X* was in direct line of vision with the door of the cabinet, and that *M* was also favourably placed for observation. These facts did not strike us until the seance was over, and *R*'s inability to see what *M* and *X* affirmed were objective lights was incomprehensible at the time being.]

" When the medium took Professor Richet's place in the cabinet, he said the latter appeared to him to be all lighted up; when Dr. Maxwell and I saw the light outside the cabinet, the medium declared he was in utter darkness. During the production of this phenomenon, M. Meurice was heard to breathe heavily; he said he did not know why he felt obliged to do this; he complained of feeling suddenly very cold; at the same time, a cold perspiration broke out on his forehead. He also said that he felt the need of stretching himself and yawning.

" An interval of ten minutes now passed. Then *M* and *X* saw an amorphous luminosity gradually form in front of the cabinet, and make slight movements in the direction of the table at which the experimenters were sitting. *M*, by the light of this luminosity, sees the curtain slowly open, and close again as the light disappears.

"*R* sees nothing definite. He thinks he sees a cloud-like substance, but is not sure of its objectivity (because of his position ?).

"As in the case of the first luminosity, so for this second one, M. Meurice declares that the cabinet is lighted up within, becoming dark when *M* and *X* see the light. He has the same sensations of cold. In addition, he says he feels tired, and asks to be allowed to discontinue the seance.

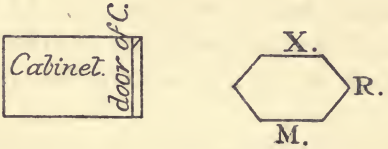
"No odour of phosphorus was perceptible, although the lights we observed had something of a phosphorescent appearance; but I think it would be more correct were I to compare what I saw on this occasion with the Milky Way; in fact, these luminosities presented an appearance almost exactly similar to that presented by the Orion nebulæ, when seen through the telescope.

"The medium looked pale and tired, when we closed the seance, but he quickly recovered his vitality, and during dinner—scarcely an hour later—some fine telekinetic movements of a heavy walnut dining-table were forthcoming in, of course, full light. Seeing the table move, apparently of its own accord, we joined hands two feet above the table, and succeeded in making it follow the direction our hands took: now an inch to the right, now three inches to the left, etc.; we had, finally, a strong, rotatory movement of six inches. The medium's knees and feet were under Professor Richet's observation, while these movements were being produced."

Third Seance

"*Thursday, 3rd November* 1904.

"For this seance, because of Professor Richet's inability to see the lights, which were visible to *M* and *X* at the preceding seance, the experimenters change their places, and sit in the following manner :—



"Professor Richet goes into the cabinet at the medium's request, the latter takes *R*'s place at the table. After an interval of ten minutes, the medium goes into the cabinet and *R* takes his new place at the table.

"Almost immediately, lights are seen moving about on the door of the cabinet. *R*, *M*, and *X* all see these lights. *M* does not see the first two lights, which *R* and *X* mention seeing. He moves closer to *R*, and then sees distinctly. *R* has the impression that a ray of light from twelve to eighteen inches long, and varying from one to three inches wide, is placed at the opening in the curtains; he thinks he sees the curtains held open, so to say, by the light.

"The ray of light appears broader to *X* than to *R* and *M*. *X* says he distinctly sees the curtains move, and open; he has the same impression as *R*, namely that of the light holding the curtains apart.

"This luminous ray was shown six times, at intervals of a few seconds only. Its duration varied from ten seconds to a minute. In form, it was constantly changing, though the long ray remained. *R*, *M*, and *X* had the impression that the luminosity was forming around the ray. A long, vertical streak of light was shown first of all; the succeeding lights appeared to be built up around this ray, which always remained the centre of luminosity; *i.e.* the light, strong in the centre, died away to right and left, leaving no distinct outline to the luminosity which, besides being amorphous, was extremely mobile, though in a sense, fairly stationary. *R*, *M*, and *X* saw slight differences in the shape of the lights, a fact which was perhaps due to their relative positions; but all three agreed as to the vertical ray and the *general* shape the luminosity appeared to be assuming.

"From time to time, M. Meurice complained of an oppressive, suffocating sensation, and said that he felt he must open the curtains, for a few seconds. Whenever he opened the curtains, *no lights were visible.* *M* and *X* took hold of his hands when he opened the curtains, and closed the latter themselves, when M. Meurice said he felt better.

"At this seance, as before, the medium prepared us for each phenomenon, by announcing beforehand, that his cabinet was suddenly illuminated, and as suddenly darkened; the darkness inside corresponded to a luminosity outside the cabinet.

"The six lights above mentioned were very distinct, and very luminous (phosphorescent).

"The phenomena ceased for a few minutes. M. Meurice then asked to be allowed to change places with *X*. This is done; *X* remains a quarter of an hour in the cabinet, during which time M. Meurice says he sees an oval-shaped light, about three times the size of an egg, floating about on the curtains of the cabinet. *R* and *M* see nothing. The medium returns to the cabinet, and *X* resumes his seat. *Immediately*, large triangular-shaped luminosities are seen by *M* and *R* outside the cabinet. *X* has suddenly fallen asleep.

"*M* and *R* then see very mobile, amorphous lights, varying from three to nine inches in diameter, floating about *X*'s head for a few seconds; their luminosity is less great than that of the lights seen on the curtains, but is sufficiently pronounced to light up *X*'s forehead.

"The phenomena again cease. *X* awakens. M. Meurice asks Dr. Maxwell to change places with him. The doctor remains in the cabinet for ten minutes: no phenomena; M. Meurice returns to the cabinet, and *M* resumes his place at Professor Richet's left.

"Very quickly, the same phenomena as before occur. The luminous ray assumes a broad, oval-shaped appearance; it measures about ten or twelve inches by about fifteen inches; it advances a few inches towards the table, and then disappears, to show itself, a few seconds later, larger, rounder in shape, and more brilliant. *M* and *X* think they can distinguish the outlines of a human face in this luminosity, but *R* says it appears amorphous to him.

"Shortly after this, *M* and *X* see a faintly luminous ball of about six inches in diameter, form outside the cabinet, —on the curtain—approach and float over the table above the experimenters' hands. *R* sees this also, but compares it to a luminous fog. *R* cannot affirm the correctness of his last perception.

"Thereupon the seance terminated.

"During the production of these phenomena, M. Meurice complained of excessive cold; we heard him shivering, and his teeth chattering. He yawned frequently, and stretched himself repeatedly; he breathed heavily, and constantly complained of feelings of oppression and sea-sickness.

"When the seance was over, he complained of intense thirst and drank several glasses of water.

"The weather on these three days was very fine, dry, and fresh.

"The conclusions arrived at by those who were present at these three seances, are:—

"1. That the above-described luminosities were decidedly objective.

"2. That no oversight, no error of observation can explain them."

The above *compte rendu* was drawn up by Professor Richet, Dr. Maxwell and Dr. X. at the end of the seances.

SERIES C

By Dr. X.

The reader will, perhaps, kindly forgive a few probably uninteresting but necessary details, before we enter upon the last series of these psycho-physical phenomena.

Many reasons, chiefly of a family nature, have rendered a substitution of names imperative. In other respects, and as far as the phenomena themselves are concerned, this series, like the foregoing, adheres most strictly to the facts as they occurred.

Early in 1903 a gentleman, whom we will call Mr. Stephens, a man occupying a high official position in Europe, wished to marry a young Swedish girl. Mr. Stephens's parents having, it appears, made other matrimonial arrangements for their son, were most strongly opposed to his wishes. Mr. Stephens decided to follow his own inclinations, and was quietly married to Miss Marie H. in the beginning of the year 1903. He did not inform his family of the step he had taken, trusting to time and events for the strained relations between himself and his people to disappear.

A short time after his marriage, he received a peremptory call to a foreign country. It was impossible for his wife to accompany him, for three excellent reasons: 1. Mr. Stephens was not supposed to have a wife. 2. The spot he was ordered to is not a spot for a woman to visit —not being as yet civilised in the European sense of the word. 3. Mrs. Stephens had reason to believe she might become a mother. Moreover, Mr. Stephens did not anticipate a longer absence than that of six months.

Mr. and Mrs. Stephens had passed the interval between their marriage and the former's departure for abroad in Paris. They lived very quietly, and had trusted their secret to no one. In the dilemma into which this foreign mission plunged them, Mr. Stephens decided to make a confidant of a particular friend, certain as he was that his secret would be in safe custody. This friend was Professor Richet.

. . . . . .

Dr. X. writes:—" Mr. Stephens was anxious not to leave his wife alone in Paris, during his absence, and knowing that Professor Richet intended making a long series of experiments with Dr. Maxwell at W., he decided, for diverse reasons, to send his wife to the same locality. Thus it came about that Mrs. Stephens was invited by Professor Richet to join the investigating circle, a circle which it had been intended should be strictly limited to Dr. Maxwell, Professor Richet, the medium [M. Meurice] and myself. *No* one, save Professor Richet, knew of the foregoing details.

"When Mrs. Stephens arrived—her husband came with her, but only remained a couple of days—we saw a tall, slight, fair woman of twenty-two or twenty-three years of age,—a quiet, gentle, refined-looking woman. As she was, curiously enough, a spiritist, and even possessed 'intuitive' faculties of a pretty marked character,—she had had several veridical hallucinations, and occasionally indulged in spectrum gazing with fair results—her addition to the circle was looked upon by the other three members as having been decided by Professor Richet, because of her nascent psychical powers. No suspicion of her situation—of which even Mrs. Stephens herself was as yet uncertain—ever dawned across our minds. She was an early riser, a good walker, and apparently enjoyed the best of health. The most practical medical eye could have detected nothing abnormal in her health.

"Very much had been expected from this particular series of experiments; but, for reasons which are beyond our comprehension, comparatively little was received. There was every evidence of abundant force, and the medium was, at times, almost unnerved by our systematic lack of success.

"Throughout the whole of this particular series, more than ever did the agency manipulating the energy act like an independent intelligence, giving striking evidence of power when it cared to do so and, when not disposed to communicate, shutting off all communication most decidedly and completely."

We propose setting forth succinctly, but in detail, the results, both mediocre and superior—*and just as they occurred*—of these few weeks of experimentation, leaving it to the reader to bestow an acute analysis upon them in his own guise. It was only as the time allotted this series drew to a close, that the phenomena took a personal turn, and bore so directly, and so intimately, upon Mrs. Stephens's life.

The notes which are quoted in this series by Dr. X. are, without exception, Professor Richet's.

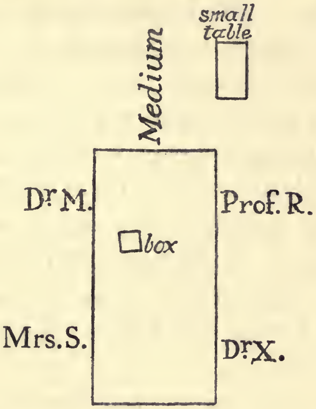
. . . . . .

First Seance. Time 8 *to* 10.30 *p.m.*

"Before sitting down," continues Dr. X., "Dr. Maxwell had placed on the table a small cardboard box, in which were two amethyst crystal balls.

"The small table was six inches away from M. Meurice, and three inches away from Professor Richet. Contact had been purposely established between the two tables by means of a small white cloth—which did not interfere in any way with the control of eyesight. A bright, electric light was burning.

"Several visions were described; they offered little interest. Then the small table moved abruptly; it approached the seance table in jerks, covering, in this manner, a distance of two and a half inches. It was verified that no contact whatever existed, save that with the white cloth; the latter was not touched by M. Meurice. Then for nearly an hour there was complete cessation of all phenomena, with the exception of perpetual rapping without intelligence. Thinking nothing more would be forthcoming, Dr. Maxwell and Professor Richet rose from the table, and went out on to the balcony of the room in which the seance was being held. Mrs. Stephens, the medium, and I remained at the table. I asked M. Meurice how he proceeded when he wished to attract articles—up to that moment I had not witnessed this interesting phenomenon. He replied, 'I have an odd sensation in my fingers, and I do this'—accompanying his words by certain hand movements; that is, he drew his hands together in front of and quite close to the cardboard box still lying on the table; he withdrew his hands—joined together at the finger-tips—very slowly, and, when the tips of his fingers were at a distance of six inches from the box, the latter began to move. It moved slowly and smoothly, without any jerking what-



soever, exactly as though it were being dragged across the table by a cord. I thought I perceived a tiny ray of light—something like a dewy spider's web with the sunlight gleaming through it—connecting M. Meurice's fingers with the box, but this was probably an illusion, as there was nothing palpable to the touch. I passed my hands around the box, and all over the medium's hands and arms, but there was no thread of any kind whatever. M. Meurice said he had not seen the box move, though I observed he appeared to be gazing fixedly at it during the operation, and though the box travelled a distance of six inches.

"Without leaving my seat I called in Dr. Maxwell and Professor Richet, and told them what had happened. M. Meurice was asked to try again, while Professor Richet put out some of the lights, thinking thus to help the force, which might have been too severely tried by its last efforts. I take the following extract from Professor Richet's notes :—

"'The same phenomenon was reproduced in my presence, but with less light—quite sufficient, however, to see everything, and every movement distinctly. The box, slowly and without any apparent jerking, followed the medium's fingers. I saw the box slowly displace itself, and drag itself over the plush-covered table, for a distance of nearly five inches. There was absolutely no contact of any kind whatsoever, either mediate or immediate. A strong gastric attack, quickly over, seized the medium after this experience.'[1]

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[1] This phenomenon may be considered of such importance as to necessitate Professor Richet's exact words being given; I therefore append them :—

'Un autre phénomène d'attraction très remarquable. Une petite boîte en

"On resuming the seance the raps were asked, 'Who is rapping?'

"Reply: 'Antion.' 'Is it Antoine?'

"Reply: 'Yes, Antoine Br.' We arrested the communication at the letter r, understanding it to mean Antoine B. of *A Complex Case*, p. 214. The raps then predicted the death of Madame B.'s second husband to take place in March 1904."

[This premonition was not realised. The gentleman in question is in remarkably good health to-day, April 1905; but, at that time, Professor Richet was anxious about him. Dr. L. was utterly prostrated by the sudden death of his wife Madame B. Neither Dr. Maxwell nor the medium knew that Antoine B.'s widow had married a second time; nor were they aware of Professor Richet's anxiety concerning Dr. L.'s health.[1]—*Note by the Translator*.]

"The communicating intelligence, purporting to be Antoine B., was then asked: 'What was the nature

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carton carrée de 0.02 de côté environ est attirée, d'abord en pleine lumière devant Dr. X. Le même phénomène s'est reproduit devant moi avec beaucoup moins de lumière. . . . La boîte était lentement et sans secousse, pendant 2 à 4 secondes, attirée par les doigts du médium et je l'ai vue se déplacer ainsi lentement, en traînant sur la peluche jusqu'à 12 centimètres environ. Il n'y a absolument aucun contact, ni médiat ni direct. (Crise gastrique forte et passagère du médium à la suite de cette expérience.)'

[1] 'Since the above was written, Dr. George L.'s son, Olivier, a youth of nineteen, has been killed in a railway accident (see p. 234). Notwithstanding the errors, there is a certain interest in the fact that the rapping force seemed to sense some near tragic occurrence to some member of the family. The raps first of all gave the surname L. of the person destined to die shortly; it was only after much hesitation that the name of George was given. The raps at first refused to give the date, but, after much pressing, dictated March 1904.

'Professor Richet did not tell any one that Madame X. had already predicted the early death "of one of the sons."'—*Note by Dr. X.*

of Madame B.'s illness?' Reply: 'Ness, foie.' (The doctors who attended Madame B. when she died have not been able to agree as to what the malady was, though they think it was probably of a tubercular nature.)

"We asked Antoine B. for another sign of identity, and received the word 'Carlos.' (Professor Richet considers it highly probable that every one present knew that Antoine B. called him by that name.)

"'When the raps dictated the name of Antoine B., the medium said he saw standing near me a young man of about thirty years of age; he had very soft blue eyes, and a short pointed beard. As far as it goes, this applies to my friend Antoine B.', says Professor Richet.

. . . . . .

"This first seance gave some fair results. We were now destined to pass several weeks without receiving a single phenomenon worth mentioning. We cannot account for this; though Dr. Maxwell is inclined to think, that the energy was spent in efforts made to obtain psychic photographs. The weather was excellent, every one was in good, even exuberant, health and spirits; the circle was very homogeneous; no *a priori* conditions had been laid down. Great things had been promised, but the great things were not forthcoming; and the 'force' did not deign to explain why, though it gave occasional signs of being to the fore, and ready to work if it cared to do so. For example, it would rap out as many airs and rhythms as requested, but took refuge in complete silence, or disorder, or pleaded fatigue, if asked for telekinetic phenomena or intelligent messages. It acted like a lazy child asked to accomplish a possible but difficult task.

. . . . . .

"Photography was tried, but without success. On one of these occasions, when M. Meurice was re-entering his room after having sat for photography, he heard footsteps beside him, and had the vision of a form which interposed itself between himself and the door, as though desirous of preventing him from entering his room. He heard the words: 'Pardon, je n'ai qu'un moment, vous avez déjà entendu parler de moi; je suis Antoine. Je viens voir mon fils.' . . . He then perceived the form of an old man, clean-shaven save for short whiskers; he was wearing the crimson robe of a magistrate. The hallucination quickly disappeared.

"No one, save Professor Richet, knew that this day was the anniversary of the death of his maternal grandfather, whose father's name happened to be Antoine. But we were all aware that Professor Richet had received various communications purporting to emanate from these two ancestors of his. It was also known that his grandfather had presided over the law-courts at Paris.

. . . . . .

"On one occasion, we had all five made an excursion into the country: and here I quote from Professor Richet's notes:—'Coming home—it was moonlight, and still twilight—we got down from the carriage—a private omnibus—to walk a while. Dr. Maxwell and M. Meurice lagged behind, and Dr. X., Mrs. S., and I got into the carriage again, before they had caught us up. As she was stepping in, Mrs. S. told me she felt as though a woman were running behind her, and were helping her into the carriage; seated, Mrs. S. continued to perceive this vision; it was wearing a hood on its head, and a cross on its breast; the vision bent its head over Mrs. S.'s hand, pressing its teeth on it "as though to show she had died in agony, stabbed to death," said Mrs. S. When Dr. Maxwell and M. Meurice rejoined us, the former told me, in an undertone, that M. Meurice had just had a vision of a woman running behind Mrs. S.; the vision was wearing a hood on its head. M. Meurice and Mrs. S. continued to see this vision for above five minutes longer, when they both saw it disappear into a clump of trees. M. Meurice and Mrs. S. communicated their impressions to Dr. Maxwell and myself respectively.

"'A few minutes afterwards, they both had another simultaneous vision. Mrs. S. saw a man astride one of the carriage-horses; M. Meurice, with an identical description of dress, saw a man not seated on, but running beside, the same horse holding the reins. He thought it was Chappe. Then everything disappeared.

"'Neither visionary communicated their impressions to the other.'

. . . . . .

"Exception made of the attractions of the box and table, the foregoing results will probably be considered as demonstrative of nothing in particular. We were now to receive something more interesting.

"Let it be said, *en passant*, that Mrs. Stephens never once saw the medium alone. There had not been the slightest break in her reserve. And all, save Professor Richet and herself, continued to think she had been invited by Professor Richet solely because of her psychical powers. M. Meurice sometimes remarked, seeking a reason for the inexplicable failure of the experiments, that he believed the cause lay in a superabundance of power, that the psychic force was too great, that Mrs. S. gave forth too much power, etc.

"Now, early one morning, three weeks after we had begun this series, Mrs. Stephens remarked to Professor Richet that [I again quote from Professor Richet's notes] 'during the night she had been thinking a great deal about the Christ, and had said to herself, if the spirits of the deceased can appear to man, why not the Christ? And she said she had asked for a sign to be given her that this could be. Mrs. Stephens had scarcely pronounced these words, when Dr. Maxwell came into the sitting-room and said: "I have just seen M. Meurice, he had a vision while I was conversing with him. He said he perceived the form of a man with short hair and beard; a halo of light behind him, a circle of gold on his head; he was dressed in white; M. Meurice says it was the Christ. With an imperious air, the form showed him a thick yellow manuscript—a papyrus—covered with writing. As M. Meurice was trying to decipher the characters for me, the vision disappeared. M. Meurice was suddenly exhausted, and had a fit of weeping before recovering his normal condition."

"'A few mornings afterwards the medium had another vision. This time it was Chappe who came, it appears, to tell him that it was not *the* Christ whom he had seen, but *a* Christ.'[1]

. . . . . .

"I must pause a while. It seems that Mrs. Stephens did not care about returning to Paris during her husband's absence; and—in the event of her hopes being well founded—had expressed to Professor Richet her great desire of passing the rest of the year near Biarritz, a place for which she had a great liking. She begged Professor Richet to write for her to a house agent to procure her a villa in that town. It seems also, that Mrs. Stephens—though her manner had never betrayed this—had taken a fancy to the medium and his family; one of his sisters is an experienced hospital nurse, and Mrs. Stephens was wondering—in quiet conversation with Professor Richet only—if it would be possible to persuade her to come and live with her at Biarritz. Upon this conversation Professor Richet obtained the address of an agent, and wrote to him according to Mrs. Stephens's wishes. He showed the letter to Mrs. Stephens. The latter said [again I quote from Professor Richet's notes]: 'Since I spoke to you about Biarritz, Chappe has told me something. He wants me to go to Bordeaux. Do not post that letter yet, let me wait a little while; if my intuition be correct, if the idea of Bordeaux really came from the spirits, they are quite capable of finding a way of indicating it to M. Meurice and Dr. Maxwell. I do not wish to speak of it myself to M. Meurice; this must come from the spirits themselves. . . .'

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[1] See note, p. 329.

"[We are endeavouring to give a faithful account of what actually occurred, and beg to be forgiven the unscientific language, which is occasionally unavoidable, if we are to convey a correct notion of the physiognomy of the phenomena.]

"Now the morning (a Thursday) following the day on which the above conversation had taken place, Mrs. Stephens came to Professor Richet, and told him she had passed a very strange and perturbed night. She said that, towards eleven o'clock, she was suddenly awakened by a sensation that some one was in her room; she was filled with fear. She turned on the light, but saw nothing. She kept the light burning, but still felt unaccountably frightened. She heard raps on the head of her bed. Gradually her fear quieted down, and she said she began to feel as though there were a host of spirits in her room, and a Great Presence was among them. 'And she imagined,' writes Professor Richet, 'that a voice spoke to her in these terms: "A powerful spirit is here, be not afraid; it is the child's guide; your child will be a boy; he has a great destiny before him, he will be a reformer. We counsel you not to force his inclinations, to choose no career for him, but to let yourself be guided by the child himself, when the time comes to think of his education."

"'Mrs. Stephens was still speaking of her night's experience, when Dr. Maxwell came into the room, and handed me,' continues Professor Richet, 'some verses which, he said, had just been written by M. Meurice—a kind of quasi-automatism—in a state of semi-somnolence. He could not understand what it meant, and simply stated the fact without offering any comment on it.'"

Here are the verses. For the sake of brevity we omit five of them, they are in the same strain as those given. We believe the reader will prefer to see these verses in the original:—

Quand un enfant vient au monde,
Vient au monde d'ici-bas,
Il faut qu'un ange en réponde,
Et le suive pas à pas.

Pas à pas il faut qu'il guide
La petite âme en chemin,
La petite âme timide,
Qu'il doit prendre par la main.

Et les anges se querellent
Autour des bébés naissants,
S'ils sont de ceux-là qu'appellent
Vers la Clarté les Puissants.

Dans la foule qui l'assaille
La petite âme choisit;
Elle est émue et tressaille,
Et la crainte la saisit.

Il faut qu'autour de la mère,
De la mère qui l'attend,
Seuls les anges de lumière
Guettent le petit enfant.

"During the course of the day, Professor Richet said to Mrs. S. that it would perhaps be well if she spoke to the medium about his sister; but Mrs. Stephens answered: 'No. Wait a little longer. I would have spoken to M. Meurice, had I been encouraged to do so by the spirits; but I think it better to let the spirits tell them.'

"Thursday passed away without any further incident, and nothing was said to Dr. Maxwell concerning Mrs. Stephens's experiences in the night, or the concomitant nature of the automatic script with those experiences.

"On Friday morning, Dr. Maxwell told Professor Richet that he had just obtained more automatic writing through M. Meurice. This writing purported to be a communication from Chappe. The communication concerned Mrs. Stephens, said Dr. Maxwell, but was not to be given to her for the time being. Chappe asked that a sitting might be arranged for on the same afternoon, as he had something to say. The sitting took place; it lasted from two to six o'clock, during the whole of which time Chappe did not once make use of his well-known subterfuges of 'fatigue,' 'silence,' 'no power,' etc.; and, though as the seance wore on M. Meurice was very visibly fatigued, the operating agency manifested absolute indifference to such fatigue. It was as though Chappe had indeed something to say and meant to say it. The messages were given by means of raps without contact to begin with, but in order to diminish the chances of fatigue to the medium, we begged him to use the pencil as a rapping instrument. The light was strong,—an afternoon summer sunlight shining into the room; the pencil did not move when the raps were heard. The latter were given with force and without any hesitation; they were as strong at the end of the seance as at the beginning."

(In order to afford the reader every assistance in his appreciation and analysis of these messages, we will give them in the original.)

"Chappe gave his special signal intimating he was present.

"Observer: 'You wish to speak with us, Chappe?'

"Chappe: 'Je veux demander à vos amis la permission de vous parler de ce qui vous intéresse.'

"Acting on the advice of Chappe, we then traced the 'magic circle' in order to prevent, as Chappe said, the intervention of too many influences, and to preserve purity in the phenomena.

"Observer, after an interval of ten minutes: 'Are you ready, Chappe?'

"Much confusion in the raps, and impossibility of obtaining an intelligent answer; after half an hour of confusion came the laboriously spelt out message:—

"Chappe: 'Peut-être que vous êtes isolés.'

"Observer: 'Why?'

"Chappe: 'Parce que vous les avez renvoyés, cercle magique.'

"We were led to understand by this that the magic circle had had too good an effect, and prevented even Chappe from communicating with his companions. Once more we followed his instructions, inviting our 'friends' into the circle. It was then announced that Robert, one of Mrs. Stephens's deceased relatives, was present and wished to speak. When asked what he had to say, we received:—

"Robert: 'Bonnes fées qui entourent et qui m'empêchent de vous rejoindre.'

"We begged the 'good fairies' to be so kind as to allow this friend to communicate. The raps indicated that the favour was accorded, and that our friend could now communicate with us.

"Robert: 'VOS ESPÉRANCES SONT REÇUES AVEC JOIE PAR TOUS.'

"Observer: 'What do you mean? Give one significative word.'

"Robert: 'ENFANT PRÉDESTINÉ À FAIRE SCIENTIFIQUEMENT DE GRANDES CHOSES.'

"Mrs. Stephens: 'What child?'

"Robert: 'Le vôtre; il arrivera, il faut être heureuse, vous aurez tant de bonheur.'

"Observer: 'Have you anything more to say?'

"Robert: 'Appelle ton enfant Chétien Alexandre.'

"Observer: 'Is Chétien Alexandre correct?'

"Robert: 'Alexandre Chrétien.'[1]

"Observer: 'Can you predict on what day he will be born?'

"Robert: 'Oui. Épiphanie.'[2]

"Mrs. Stephens: 'Do you know who the child's guide is?'

"Robert: 'Oui.'

"Mrs. Stephens: 'What is his name?'

"Robert: 'Réponse plus tard.'

"Observer: 'Have you anything more to say?'

"Robert: 'Prudence.' For whom? 'Marie' (Mrs. Stephens). 'Au revoir.'

"At the end of the above seance Dr. Maxwell handed Professor Richet the automatic script he had received in the morning. It read: '. . . (Mrs. Stephens) est en voie de famille. Elle désire aller à Biarritz et que (the name of the medium's sister) l'accompagne. Mais dites lui d'aller à Bordeaux, où elle sera mieux soignée et où les influences sont bonnes.'

. . . . . .

"A few days after the above messages had been received, the raps again signified their desire to communicate. The following conversation then took place.

"Observer: 'Who is here?'

"Reply: 'Robert. Ménagez Marie. Marie . . .

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[1] "The medium has frequently said that if he ever had a son, he would call him Chrétien. The name Alexandre was also constantly on our lips, for two personifications, who frequently claimed to be communicating, were called Alexandre.

[2] "Mrs. Stephens had a preference for the Epiphany, and she told us, after the seance, that she had mentally asked her child might be born on that day—the 6th of January."—*Note by Dr. X.*

Aesotheu . . .' (change of tonality, and Chappe's signal was given).

"Chappe: 'Restez un moment tranquille. Il y a trop de monde.'

"(Another change of tonality in the raps, followed by C. R.'s signal—Professor Richet's grandfather.)

"C. R. 'Quelque force mauvaise m'empêche de vous parler.' (Confusion for some time; raps of various tonalities and in great number resound on the woodwork of the foot of the medium's bed—we were holding the seance in his room by Chappe's express desire.)

"Chappe: 'Je ne veux pas qu'on se serve de cette chambre.'

"Observer: 'Why?'

"Chappe: 'Parce que Meurice y couche.'

"Observer: 'Where shall we go then?'

"Chappe: 'Où vous voudrez.'

"This was not by any means the first time we had held a seance in M. Meurice's room, no objection had ever been made to this proceeding before, which, in fact, had been recommended by Chappe.

"It was impossible to obtain another sign of any nature whatsoever. Professor Richet, Mrs. Stephens, and I went out of the room, leaving Dr. Maxwell and the medium alone. We had scarcely left when the latter, it appears, turned to Dr. Maxwell and said: 'I see Professor Richet tearing up some printed matter and burning it. I think it is the bad influence Chappe was speaking about.'

"We three alone, commenting upon these messages, laid stress upon the excuse of 'bad influences,' and thought it was probably one of Chappe's tricks to avoid working, when it did not suit him to work. But suddenly Professor Richet remembered a piece of newspaper which he had put into his inner breast coat-pocket early that same morning, and on which was the name of a man who had been drowned the previous week—drowned before our eyes. This event had left a great impression on us all, every one had made strenuous efforts to save the man, and the medium in particular had striven hard to restore life. Professor Richet, coming across the man's name in a newspaper, had cut it out, and put the slip into his pocket-book, for reference sake, in case the phenomena should turn upon the drowned man. No one was near or could possibly have seen Professor Richet do this ; he also took the precaution of destroying the paper from which he had taken the announcement.

" Now Professor Richet took the cutting out of his pocket-book, tore it up and burnt it before Mrs. Stephens and myself, laughingly saying : 'Let us see if that will destroy the bad influence.'

" It was not till some hours afterwards, that he was told of what M. Meurice had said relative to the 'burning of printed matter,' etc.

. . . . . .

" The next day, M. Meurice gave a fine phenomenon of attraction in presence of Professor Richet and Dr. Maxwell. It was two o'clock in the afternoon ; the two latter were playing chess ; M. Meurice was lying on the floor reading ; a fan was on the floor near him. He said : 'I begin to feel the cobwebby sensation in my fingers ; let us see if I can attract this fan.' Dr. Maxwell and Professor Richet left the table, and knelt down on the floor beside M. Meurice; the latter proceeded, first of all, as though he were enveloping the fan with something; then, meeting his hands at the finger-tips, he drew them back very slowly. When his fingers were about six inches away from the fan, the latter moved, and slowly followed his fingers for a distance of five inches. Professor Richet and Dr. Maxwell assured themselves by sight and touch, that the fan was not normally connected with the medium. The latter had a violent gastric attack immediately after the production of this phenomenon.

. . . . . .

"Professor Richet's birthday occurred during these investigations, and, when the day arrived, we ventured to express a hope that he might be favoured with some good phenomena. We tried, and received abundant signs of energy in the shape of raps. Chappe was asked if he had not something to say or offer Professor Richet as a birthday present.

"Reply: 'Depuis votre naissance vous avez grandi! Vous aurez des communications plus intéressantes, que celles que vous avez reçues.'

"At this point some one asked the medium if he felt tired, and Chappe at once dictated:—

"'Il faut pour un moment se reposer si on est fatigué.' However, no notice was taken of this advice.

"Prof. R: 'Why has my mother never communicated?'

"Chappe: 'Parce que vous ne l'avez jamais appelée.'[1]

"Here the raps indicate that 'C. R.' wishes to communicate.

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[1] "True; but then neither was C. R. nor Antoine B. nor any other personification ever evoked."—*Note by Dr. X.*

"C. R. (Prof. Richet's grandfather): 'Je suis très content d'être avec vous.' Much confusion and meaningless rapping. 'Ici.'

"Chappe: 'G. ne vous reverra pas.'

"Prof. R.: 'Can you tell me my mother's name?'

"Chappe: 'Je pourrai le dire quand je le saurai.'

"There was a brief silence, during which Chappe was supposed to be asking C. R. for the desired name.

"Chappe: 'Adèle.' Wrong. But it was known that this was a family name.

"C. R.: 'Veux-tu voir ta mère? Fais attention. Cette nuit elle t'apparaîtra en rêve.' This promise was not fulfilled.

"Prof. R.: 'Try again for my mother's name.'

"C. R.: 'A — o — a — m — e; Marig; Antoine; ther.'

"There was no approach to the desired name. There was plenty of energy, and the raps flowed quickly and without hesitation in certain instances, such as 'Veux-tu voir ta mère?'

"Chappe: 'Prudence.'

"Observer: 'Why?'

"Observer: 'Can you now give the name of the child's guide?'

"Chappe: 'Plus tard. Adieu.'

"The communicating intelligence frequently manifests —a fact which was particularly noticeable during this series of experiments—a supreme indifference to scientific aspirations, to furnishing proofs of identity or of any desire to meet the investigator halfway, and help him in his researches.

"Since the communications concerning Mrs. Stephens had been received, whenever it was intimated that 'they' had something to say, that something was generally the word 'Prudence' or terms of a like signification.

"The agency at work allowed it to be clearly seen that—for the time being at least—it interested itself in no one save in Mrs. Stephens. This solicitude was continued up to the last; time after time the word 'Prudence' was uttered, so often in fact as to lose all meaning from sheer force of repetition; and no out-of-the-way heed was taken of the advice.

"This series of experiments came to an end.

"Mrs. Stephens took a villa on the outskirts of Bordeaux, where the medium's sister joined her.

. . . . . .

"It appears that Mrs. Stephens looked forward with unusual joy to the coming event, and was much opposed to the idea of a wet nurse. I was now at Bordeaux; I often saw Mrs. Stephens, and it is highly probable that M. Meurice, like myself, knew of Mrs. Stephens's very legitimate desire. Now Chappe had, for some time, given no sign of his presence; but one day, when M. Meurice, Mrs. S., and I were out walking, sharp raps suddenly resounded on the medium's walking-stick. Mrs. S. begged him to touch the handle of her umbrella—which was open; raps were then given on the outstretched silk. With loud decided raps, Chappe quickly dictated: 'Retenez bien ceci, il ne faut pas laisser Marie allaiter.' We asked the wherefore, but the silence was complete; do what we would, not another rap could be obtained.

"On another occasion, when raps were forthcoming, we asked Chappe for a word which would portray the state of mind of those present, and received the very appropriate reply: 'Paix absolue.' This message was given on the silk of the open umbrella, M. Meurice lightly touching the handle only.

"As the 6th of January drew near, Chappe began to get nervous about the fate of the prediction, and, by means of automatic writing, he indicated that we were to remember, that it was not he, but Robert, who had predicted that the birth would take place on the 6th January. Thereupon, he added that the event would not occur before the 15th of January—that it would take place on the night of the 14th-15th January. During the last fortnight this was often referred to by Chappe, by means of automatic writing—which perhaps gives more scope for the play of the subliminal. Chappe washed his hands, so to say, of Robert and his doings.

"Towards the 20th of December, Mrs. Stephens received news that her husband was on his way home, but was feeling rather unwell. In the letter, the word 'néphrite' was made use of. Mrs. S. did not mention this to any one; she said, however, that her husband had a slight kidney worry. The next day, the following communication, bearing upon Mr. S.'s anticipated arrival in Bordeaux, was received from Chappe by raps through the pencil:—

"'Il faut que vous l'empêchiez de se mettre en route pour Bordeaux.'

"Why? 'Maladie sérieuse s'il avait froid.' What is he suffering from? 'Néphrite. Recommandez repos absolu; bonsoir.'

"On another occasion, always referring to the same subject, Mr. S.'s indisposition, Chappe said: 'Pas sage de faire le trajet de Londres à Bordeaux. Rassurez-vous. Maladie pas grave.'

"The child—a boy—was born at 2.15 on the afternoon of the 5th January, that is, on the eve of the Epiphany—and not on the Epiphany as was predicted (page 355).[1]

. . . . . .

"Mrs. Stephens desired to add the name of Quentin to the names of Alexandre Chrétien. I happened to mention this to M. Meurice, and by so doing awakened Chappe and a salvo of raps. He would not say what he wanted, and M. Meurice remarked: 'We are to go into Mrs. Stephens's bedroom.' We were admitted. M. Meurice stood near the head of the bed, but did not touch it. The raps resounded on the wood of the bed. Chappe dictated: 'Il ne faut pas appeler Quentin.' The force was abundant, and this message had been given quickly and with decision; yet, when we asked why the child should not be called Quentin, we could get no reply. It was for all the world as though a distinct intelligence was behind those raps, one, who, like ourselves, knew, on occasion, how to say: 'I have said; let that suffice.'

"For a week, all went well with mother and child. Seven days after the child's birth, Mrs. Stephens was seized with a violent and inexplicable fever. The following day, a thoughtless servant handed her a telegram;

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[1] "On the 4th January, Mrs. Stephens was particularly anxious about her husband, and insisted on driving into Bordeaux and personally sending him a telegram. Without a doubt, the anxiety and physical restlessness of the previous few days hastened the event."—*Note by Dr. X.*

the telegram announced the death of her husband. The fever regained possession, and Mrs. Stephens died the same night.

"Perhaps in conclusion, and as our only comment on this history, it may not be out of place to recall to mind Chappe's oft-repeated word, 'Prudence.'"

. . . . . .

And now, lest in the relation of the foregoing experiences, say rather in this simple registration of a few ascertained facts, we be reproached for a language which carries associations from which certain minds of a scientific bent may shrink, may we be permitted to say that there is more appearance than reality in our backsliding—if backsliding there be. We have given an exposition of facts, touching upon unknown forces and arduous problems; the magnitude and complexity of which we realise but too deeply—problems which cannot be solved by academic methods. Time and patient constancy of research are needed to bring them to a successful issue.

CHAPTER VII

FRAUD AND ERROR

This work would be incomplete, if I did not carefully examine fraud and errors of observation. The first should always be considered as possible. Errors of observation are even more numerous than fraud, and their sources are manifold. We should study them, learn their causes, and suspect them until the contrary has been proved.

I. FRAUD

Fraud can be conscious, unconscious, or mixed. I have no need to say how frequent the first is, especially with paid mediums. Spiritistic reviews, notably the Revue Spirite, Revue Morale et Scientifique du Spiritisme, Light, Psychische Studien, give many examples of fraud discovered by spiritists themselves. Unconscious fraud is no less common than conscious fraud; as for the third, mixed fraud, this is also very often observed.

Conscious fraud.—(*a*) *Raps.* Nothing is easier to imitate. I have indicated the diverse ways of reproducing them artificially: gliding the finger or nail along the top of the table, with or without the help of resin; rapping with the feet; gliding the foot or dress—especially silk dresses—against the legs of table, etc.

These diverse movements imitate feeble raps to perfection, if they be slowly made. For that reason I have always refused to consider raps as convincing when produced with any contact whatever. Consequently I exclude raps produced on the floor from those phenomena which have determined my conviction. Certain persons seem to be able to move their tendons at will, even making a considerable noise in that way. I observed this with a medical student who, by resting his elbow on the table, produced very sonorous raps ; but the movement of his arm was easily seen. I know another person who could crack his joints at will.

The play of the knee-joint has been especially incriminated by Mrs. Sidgwick in her article 'The Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism' (*Proceedings of the S.P.R.* xiii. 45). She recalls to mind the interpretations given by Drs. Lee, Flint, and Coventry, who observed Mrs. Kane and Mrs. Underhill, two of the famous Fox sisters. Mrs. Sidgwick experimented with the third sister, Mrs. Jencken, and accepted the explanation of the American doctors. For them, the double raps were produced by a rapid movement of dislocation and readjustment of the knee. By placing in such a position as to render that voluntary dislocation impossible, *e.g.* by making the medium sit down with outstretched legs and heels resting on a soft cushion, no raps were forthcoming. It is possible that the explanation of the American doctors may be true concerning the case examined by them. In those which I have studied, it is certainly not acceptable. I have obtained raps on a table without any kind of contact whatsoever. I have obtained them on the floor, by placing the medium in positions which excluded the play of articulation. The kind of fraud in question was not therefore in operation. I have even made some mediums sit on my knees when raps were forthcoming; I then made sure the raps were produced on the table, and that the latter was not touched. My conclusion as to the reality of the phenomenon of raps is the result of nearly two hundred observations.

In obscurity, the means of cheating are unimaginable. I saw a young medium, who had succeeded in concealing a stick, simulate raps on the ceiling with it. I have known two others hit the table with their fists, kick it with their feet, etc. Everything is possible in darkness, and with certain confiding observers.

(*b*) *Parakinesis*, or abnormal movements of objects with contact. I have often said that all movements with contact—except certain levitations which are, however, difficult to observe with precision—are worthless. I have indicated the chief ways of simulating levitations, either by the hands, the feet or the knees. I will not revert to this.

These methods are difficult in full light, but when the experimenters are placed in such a position as to be unable to keep a reciprocal watch over the feet, the second method is still easily brought into play.

(*c*) *Telekinesis.*—Fraud is more difficult to perpetrate here. A connecting link of some kind or other would be required to move objects possessing a certain weight and bulk. I look upon this phenomenon as most convincing, when it is obtained in full light; in obscurity, it is to a certain extent unverifiable.

(*d*) *Luminous phenomena* are easily simulated; phosphorescent oil and certain sulphides give excellent imitations of hands and forms. I have seen a photograph taken by magnesian light in a seance for materialisation. The medium, by way of imitating a materialised garment of some kind, had wound a white cloth around his neck, and moreover wore a false beard. Those present at this seance will not admit they were cheated. One of the sitters, a friend of mine, one familiar with psychical matters, but too honest himself to suspect fraud in others, did not think my judgment in this case was correct. It was necessary to have it confirmed by the celebrated Papus!

As for the phenomenon of *attouchements*, this is of all phenomena the most easily simulated in obscurity.

Every one knows the rôle played by dolls, disguises and confederates in seances for materialisation. The trickster's imagination is of inconceivable fertility. The recent Rothe trial gives us a fresh example of this.

(*e*) *Motor and sensory automatisms* can be imitated with extreme facility, and their efficacious control is impossible. A careful analysis of the messages is necessary in order to appreciate their value. On the other hand, well-observed premonitions are of immense importance.

From the preceding, we see that all psychical phenomena can be simulated; this does not mean that every psychical phenomenon is simulated. Those who wish to explain away everything by fraud make as great a mistake, as those who trustingly accept everything without control.

There is an important general observation to be made concerning the phenomena I am treating in this book.

It is of historical order, but nevertheless it gives a much wider signification to these facts than is usually accorded them. Many writers, Janet among them, imagine that *spiritistic* phenomena, as they call them, date from the celebrated events of Rochester, about the year 1847, where the Fox sisters were the objects of diverse manifestations. But in reality these facts date much further back. One of the best observed cases is the one spoken of by Dr. Kerner in his book *Die Seherin von Prevorst*, which has been translated by Dr. Dusart into French, probably from Mrs. Crowe's English translation. Kerner observed raps and movements without contact from the year 1827, when he had Madame Hauff staying in his house.

Phenomenon of the same kind are to be met with in accounts of haunted houses. There are stories of this kind dating from remote epochs, and diverse decrees of parliament exist cancelling leases for this cause. These phenomena were criticised at the end of the eighteenth century.

It is only the metaphysical system founded upon these facts which is new. It is in that, and in that only, that spiritism or spiritualism consists. It is undeniable that the doctrine embodying the essence of these teachings has attained a considerable extension. I pointed out the radical differences existing between the beliefs of Anglo-Saxon spiritists and those of spiritists of other nationalities, particularly in that which concerns reincarnation. I will not go back to this ; but in order to specify the point in question, I will recall to mind that the only new phenomena which spiritistic forms of contemporary mysticism offer, are their constitution into a body of religious doctrines and their rapid extension. These phenomena are of sociological, not biological order. The facts upon which they are based belong, on the contrary, to biology.

Further, it is not absolutely true to say, that the metaphysical theories established upon the revelations of spirits are new. The life of some of the 'saints' in the Roman Church offers us several examples, one of the most celebrated being the devotion to the *Sacrè Cœur de Jésus*,' a special kind of worship based upon revelations claimed to have been accorded to a nun named Marie Alacoque, who lived in the eighteenth century. Monastic life has not the monopoly of such experiences. Commerce with spirits appears to be likewise one of the elements of the religious ceremonies of the Shakers; even the Mormons seem to indulge in practices similar to those of spiritism; Jérôme Cardan, John Dee, Martinez de Pasqually pass for having held intercourse with immaterial beings; members of the order of the Red Cross have also been looked upon as holding frequent intercourse with diverse genii. If we study the history of human thought, we see that nothing is really new, nothing save perhaps the contemporary extension of spiritism. From many points of view, spiritism appears to play a rôle in the civilised, sceptical, material society of to-day, analogous to the simple rôle which Christianity played in the second and third centuries of our era.

But this is a sociological problem; its examination, however interesting it may be, would lead me beyond the limits I have traced for myself. I will confine myself, therefore, to drawing from the brief historical account I have just given, the conclusion it admits of. The facts studied by Janet and others are anterior to spiritism, and cannot be legitimately designated by this name. I have already indicated that this word expresses an *ensemble* of metaphysical and religious doctrines explaining psychical phenomena by the intervention of spirits, and drawing their teachings from the revelations attributed to these same spirits. It is terminologically incorrect to designate these facts by a word which has a wider signification, since it expresses an explanatory hypothesis of these same facts.

Custom has consecrated the word 'psychical' facts or phenomena : this term is also imperfect, and it seems to me preferable to adopt the new term *Metapsychical* which Richet recommends.

Therefore, in the actual state of research, the scientific problem, it seems to me, is not whether spiritism be true or false, but whether metapsychical phenomena be real or imaginary.

As Richet and Ochorowicz have said, every medium may defraud, and the analysis of fraud is one of the most complicated problems which the study of psychical phenomena presents. It is also one of the most interesting. The Cambridge[1] experiments with Eusapia Paladino put clearly before us the question of fraud and its signification.

Before entering upon the psychological examination of fraud, it appears to me necessary to explain the signification of the terms I am going to use, and after that to classify medianic phenomena.

It is of primary importance to determine the correct signification of the expression *consciousness*.[2] There are few words in philosophical language which have such diverse acceptations. As my conception of consciousness is somewhat special without at the same time being peculiar to me, I owe it to my readers to say what I mean to designate by this term.

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[1] See Appendix B.

[2] The French have but one word to express what is meant in English by

I conceive consciousness, *lato sensu*, as a function of living matter. It is the particular state which determines in organised and living matter another state of the centre where this matter lives. It is, if you like, a kind of reaction of the living matter in harmony with external phenomena. This mode of reaction, like every other mode of reaction, allows of two conditions: some sort of sensibility to the action of the ambient, permitting variations thereof to be felt; some sort of activity which permits of realising an adaptation to the ambient, and of producing internal modifications corresponding, in some measure, to the perceived external modifications. In order that the internal modifications may realise this equilibrium, they must not go beyond a certain amplitude, whence the theoretic necessity for the *sensibility* to be always apprised of the internal modifications of the living substance, as it perceives the external modifications of the ambient.

Experience proves that in reality things do happen in this way. In fact, we are able in the animal kingdom to prove the existence of special organs, some of them destined to the perception of the successive states of the ambient and of the individual, the others to the active

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the word *Conscience* (*i.e.* the principle which decides on the lawfulness or unlawfulness of our actions or desires), and the word *Consciousness* (*i.e.* the being aware, the knowing of one's own thoughts). Nevertheless we consider this chapter could ill spare this masterly synthesis.—*Note of Translator.*

realisation of the latter to the former. The different modifications provoked in the *receptive* system by the variations of the ambient, determine in their turn the intervention of the *active* system which realises the internal variations. This is the principle of the nervous and muscular systems, the latter being only put into play by the former ; natural history shows us the progressive specialisation of these nervous and muscular elements. At first non-differentiated in appearance, the animal cell presents in more complicated animals a sensitive pole and an active pole, the one nervous, the other muscular. The myo-epithelial or neuro-muscular cells offer us a classical example in the hydra.

The examination of the development of the nervous system and of the muscular system in the vertebrata shows us their growing specialisation. The nervous cells are associated in systems more or less dependent the one upon the other ; the muscular cells are accumulated into masses. This is the application of that law of the division of labour, the constant operation of which we observe in all the phenomena of life. The nervous cells are grouped together in a heap, in a nucleus, and send their prolongations to the periphery or to the organs. These prolongations are of two kinds : some transmit impressions towards the cell (dendrites prolongations), others transmit excitations proceeding from the cell (cylindraxes prolongations).[1] The centres themselves are hierarchised, so to speak, and are divided into two wide categories : the first destined to the functions of organic life, circulation, secretions, digestion, etc.; the second to those of the life of relation. These two categories include the sensitive cells and the motor cells; the one transmits to the other the stimulus born of excitations provoked by the internal or external centres.

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[1] *Dendrites*, nerves conducting the influx towards the centre of the cell.
Cylindraxes, nerves conducting from the cell towards the periphery or towards another cell.

In superior animals, at any rate in man, we observe that the activity of certain nervous centres is accompanied by a particular phenomenon, which is designated under the name of *personal* consciousness. It is the notion we have that the phenomenon is perceived by us, that the movement executed is executed by us.

Personal consciousness does not accompany all perceived phenomena, nor all executed movements. Certain given conditions of diverse orders appear necessary, for the consciousness to become aware of these phenomena. This conscious consciousness is translated by the connection of the impression or of the movement with a personality.

This personality looks to us as though it were continuous. It is around it that our past impressions are grouped in the form of souvenirs. It is that which continues the 'self.'

The consciousness I have just described is what I call the *personal consciousness.* The notion of personality which characterises it is not invariable, and is not necessary.

It is not invariable, because the study of morbid psychology reveals to us that different personalities can succeed one another in the same individual, or even appear to be concomitant. This is notably the case with secondary personalities in hysteria or in epilepsy.

It is not necessary, for diverse phenomena can be perceived and stored up in the memory without the personal consciousness being conscious thereof; in the same way, movements adapted to a certain purpose may be executed without the personal consciousness being warned thereof: such are notably the reflex and complicated movements, which custom has rendered automatic.

The result of these facts is that the personal consciousness is manifested as a limitation of the general consciousness, of what I will simply call *the consciousness.* The study of the alterations of memory notably—diverse amnesiæ, hypermnesiæ, paramnesiæ—shows us that those souvenirs of which the general and impersonal consciousness has the free disposition are incomparably more numerous than those at the disposal of the personal consciousness. This is incontestable as far as memory is concerned ; is it so with intelligence? It is hard to say; there are, however, numerous examples of problems solved and of work accomplished without the knowledge of the personal consciousness.

Anatomy and physiology inform us, that personal consciousness is manifested in phenomena, which appear to have their seat in certain regions on the surface of the cerebral hemispheres. The cortical region seems to be appropriated, at least in part, by psychological phenomena, of which personality is the centre, active memory, attention, judgment, abstraction, will. It is for this reason that this region is called ‘ the superior centres.’ Underneath this region the cerebral sub-cortical ganglions, the bulbous and medullary nuclei, the sympathetic ganglions, and the plexus constitute the inferior centres which preside over certain functions foreign to the personal consciousness.

However, it must not be thought that the activity of the cortical centres is always perceived by the personal consciousness. That of the motor centres, for example, may exist unknown to the personal consciousness. I have already given the indication of certain complicated movements which can be voluntary and personally conscious in the beginning, and become, in the end, unconscious and yet voluntary; *e.g.* the playing of a musical instrument. Likewise, certain involuntary movements can sometimes be perceived by the personal consciousness; *e.g.* the rapid movement we make in chasing away a fly which is worrying us. If the centre motors of the arm which drives away the fly be sub-cortical or medullary, it is none the less true that the movements executed, even when they appear to be pure reflex movements, can sometimes be perceived.

Movements executed without the participation of the personal consciousness and will are called *automatic*. This expression signifies for me, that the voluntary activity of the personality remains foreign to the movement executed.

Therefore, in the motor sphere, that is to say in movements, we may have different relations between the movement executed and the personal consciousness. We have, first of all, conscious and voluntary movements; then involuntary or impulsive movements, perceived or unperceived by the personal consciousness.

These diverse movements are normal: that is to say, they are executed according to the recognised rules of muscular activity; they do not go beyond the peripheral limit of the body; the nervous influx is diffused along the nerves in the ordinary manner.

If the nervous influx, or more correctly speaking, the mode of energy which constitutes it, goes beyond the material limits of the body, we have phenomena designated by de Rochas under the name of *extériorisation de la motricité*. These are again automatic phenomena for me, since the personal consciousness and the will do not participate in them. But they present a feature which distinguishes them from normal automatisms: they are *exosomatic*, if I may use that expression, while the others are *endosomatic*. These two expressions signify for me, the one exosomatic, that the movements are produced beyond the limits of the body; the other endosomatic, that they are produced within the limits of the body, that is to say by muscular activity acting physiologically. The first, which are apparently contrary to the ordinary data of experience, are paranormal phenomena, that is to say, outside the usual rule; the second, on the contrary, are normal. Parakinesis is a paranormal movement with contact; telekinesis is a paranormal movement without contact.

Sensibility presents the same categories of facts. Properly speaking there is no veritable automatism in phenomena of sensitivity; but we can nevertheless distinguish therein, first, normal sensitive phenomena—that is to say, phenomena produced under physiological conditions, more or less well-known, but frequent, such as hallucinations, hypermnesiæ; and second, paranormal phenomena, that is to say, phenomena which imply the existence of modes of perception to which the normal personality is foreign—clairvoyance, clairaudience, teleæsthesia, telepathy (Myers, Gurney, Podmore), exteriorisation of motor power (de Rochas).

I have already indicated that these perceptions appear to depend upon the *impersonal* consciousness, and that the impressions thus perceived are transmitted to the personal consciousness in a given form analogous to that of dream perceptions—that is to say, in a dramatic form, with a concrete and symbolical setting. The impersonal consciousness seems, therefore, to be affected in a vague, general manner: the perceptions only assume an appearance of precision in those strata of the consciousness, where the notion of personality is determined. Hence the following conclusions, which I only give as probabilities: (1) that the notion of personality is susceptible of diverse degrees; (2) that the impressions perceived by the general consciousness are agreeable or disagreeable—that is to say, only impart to the personal consciousness a very vague message, moral comfort or indefinable discomfort; that, in rarer cases, the transmitted message is more precise, and takes the form of a detailed hallucination; (3) that, if telepathy exists, the general consciousness is capable of being affected by channels other than those of the ordinary senses, which have only a value in ratio to the personal consciousness of which they are, perhaps, the condition.

This last consideration brings us back to the definition which I gave a little while ago of consciousness, which is, for me, the common property of all living matter: its sensuality is limited and specified by the *senses*, is limited and specified by the personality and the will.

I beg the reader to excuse me for having entered into these explanations. I wished, as I said before, to state as clearly as possible the meanings I attach to the terms I use; I have still another task to accomplish somewhat similar to the last: which is to classify medianic phenomena before studying their relations with fraud. In the first place I divide them into two wide categories, each capable of penetrating into the other, for, with the exception of luminosities, physical phenomena are rarely devoid of all meaning, and intellectual phenomena have always some fact of a physical nature as substratum. Therefore, these two categories are two *different aspects* of the same phenomena rather than two distinct categories.

If we consider the purely physical side, we have the following approximate series:—

PHYSICAL PHENOMENA

Sonorous.—Raps; diverse noises.

Motor. — Normal; paranormal; parakinesis; telekinesis.

Luminous.—Amorphous; definite forms; psychic (?) photography.

If we consider the form of communications, in appearance intelligent, by adhering to the mode of expression of the *intellectual* sense of the phenomena, we have the following classification:—

INTELLECTUAL PHENOMENA: ENDOSOMATIC AUTOMATISM

Muscular.—Typtology; grammatology; automatic script; automatic speaking.

Sensorial.—Visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, olfactory phenomena.

Vaso-Motor.—Secretory phenomena; vascular phenomena; perspirations, etc.

EXOSOMATIC AUTOMATISM

(*Exteriorisations*): *Motor.*—Telekinesis; psychography (direct writing); psychophony (direct voice).
——— *Sensitive-Sensorial.*—Telepathy; telæsthesia.
——— *Plastic.*—Materialisations; apports, etc.

On the other hand, if we examine fraud in a general manner, we will notice the following correspondences: the words conscious and unconscious are taken in the sense of the personal consciousness:—

Motricity:	*normal.*	1. Conscious and voluntary movements.	Conscious voluntary fraud. Simulation; responsibility.
——	——	2. Conscious but involuntary movements.	Conscious impulsive fraud. Simulation; irresponsibility.
——	——	3. Unconscious and involuntary movements.	Impulsive and unconscious fraud; irresponsibility.
——	*paranormal.*	4. Exteriorisation of motricity and plasticity; telekinesis; materialisations.	No fraud.
Sensibility:	*normal.*	5. Voluntary falsehood.	Voluntary and conscious fraud. Simulation; responsibility.
Sensibility:	*normal.*	6. Illusions; hallucinations; hypermnesiæ; paramnesiæ.	No fraud; no real phenomenon.
——	*paranormal.*	7. Exteriorisation of the sensibility; clairaudience; telepathy; clairvoyance.	No fraud; real phenomena.

As for true exosomatic automatism, there can be no question of fraud as far as it is concerned. This classification, which I only give as an experiment, appears to me more complete than that of Ochorowicz's (*Annales de Sciences Psychiques*, vi. 97). The latter distinguishes—

(*a*) Conscious fraud.	
(*b*) Unconscious fraud :	
in the waking state . .	Medianity of an inferior order.
in the trance state . .	
(*c*) Partial, automatic fraud .	Medianity of a superior order.
(*d*) The pure phenomenon . .	

If we compare Ochorowicz's table with mine we will notice that his conscious fraud corresponds to Nos. 1 and 5 of my classification.

His unconscious fraud to No. 3.

I divide his partial, automatic fraud into the classes 2, 3, and 6.

The pure phenomenon into the classes 4 and 7.

His superior medianity includes all exosomatic automatisms (Nos. 4 and 7); his inferior medianity, the classes 3 and 6.

These general indications given, it is easy to see that I divide fraud into three categories, which are, moreover, susceptible of co-existing and of forming mixed types : this is the ordinary case. We have, first of all, the guilty, voluntary and conscious fraud ; then the impulsive, but conscious, frequent fraud ; then the unconscious and involuntary fraud, veritable normal automatism : the author cannot be held responsible for this last order of fraud, which is, moreover, very frequent with many excellent mediums.

If we study the psychological mechanism of fraud, we will find variable and diverse causes.

1. CONSCIOUS AND VOLUNTARY FRAUD

The most usual cause is self-interest. This is the case with charlatans, who speculate upon the credulity of the public. We must not think this is the only motive; each impostor obeys motives which are peculiar to himself. The medical student, who gave me such curious examples of fraud, was not actuated by motives of self-interest. I think it was simply for the pleasure of cheating, of taking me in, for I had often spoken to him about my suspicions. He often cheated simply as a prank; this is what happened in a seance given by a spiritistic group to convince some new converts, when my student, it appears, gave them manifestations somewhat out of the common!

However, conscious and voluntary fraud raise no real psychological problem.

2. CONSCIOUS AND INVOLUNTARY OR MIXED FRAUD

On the contrary, the problem originates in this order of fraud. It often happens in circles, though composed of honourable persons, that some of the sitters, who would be incapable of voluntarily committing a fraud, do not dare to accuse themselves of an involuntary movement made by them, and of which they are conscious. This can only be applied to fairly rapid movements, such as those which imitate raps or parakinetic movements. In serious seances, the sitters should give themselves the habit of openly acknowledging every involuntary movement; it will be noticed that certain persons are very prone to these movements. They often end by being ashamed of accusing themselves so often, and thus fraud from timidity: I have met with this, especially among women. It is one of the reasons which make me condemn all experiments for the production of movements with contact.

Timidity is the usual cause of this kind of fraud: the psychological problem raised is simple.

3. UNCONSCIOUS AND INVOLUNTARY FRAUD

Here the problem becomes complicated. I will not distinguish, as Ochorowicz does, fraud committed in the waking state from fraud committed in the trance or second state. The psychological mechanism is the same in both cases, and appears to me to depend upon self-suggestion, or what has been called *monoïdeism*, that is to say, the mind is invaded by one idea, which ends by stifling all others, and by realising itself: it is, in reality, a phenomenon analogous to that determined by suggestion.

It is in unconscious or involuntary frauds, that the psychological disaggregation of the medium which Janet has studied, is best observed. These frauds present phenomena which are without interest from a medianic point of view.

What is the mechanism of unconscious and involuntary frauds? It appears to me to be the following: the subjects—they may have been good mediums in their day—who commit this kind of fraud sit down to the table, or give a seance in view of obtaining supernormal phenomena. But the production of these phenomena is often difficult, sometimes impossible. Immobility, expectation, and obscurity act powerfully upon the nervous system of these mediums, and particularly so when they are hysterical. They determine the trance; the desire for the phenomenon becomes a fixed idea, and then a self-suggestion. If the supernormal phenomenon delays, the inferior strata of the consciousness—*whose morality often differs greatly from that of the active personal consciousness*—realises it normally.

In the same way, even if the sensitive does not fall into the trance state, there is, nevertheless, a particular state manifested which is not sleep, neither is it the full, genuine waking-state. The active and voluntary personal element of the consciousness, as well as the judgment, becomes weakened. The sphere of the personality is reduced, and personal activity gives place to automatism. Every degree between conscious and involuntary fraud and pure automatism is to be met with.

Therefore, it is prudent to take measures to guard against fraud with all subjects who become entranced, or with those who become somnolent in obscurity, silence, immobility, and expectation; but we should be frank with our sensitives: let us not offer, in ourselves, an example of dissimulation to the medium; neither must we let him have the impression of not being controlled: this would be to expose him to a temptation, all the greater in that his personal power of volition is weakened.

Add to this, that we do not in the least know what influence the mental state of the experimenters has upon the medium, although some kind of influence appears to me to exist. We do not know to what extent an ill-founded certitude of fraud can be responsible for its birth. Ochorowicz says on this subject:—

'After having recognised that the medium is only a mirror, who reflects and directs the ideas and nervous forces of the assistants towards an ideoplastic end, we will not be surprised to see that *suggestion* plays an important rôle therein. There is no doubt but that the assistants can suggest the desired act to the medium ; neither is it doubtful that the manifestations bear the stamp of surrounding beliefs. In a society of materialists I have seen "John" (with Eusapia Paladino) become dissolved into an impersonal force, which the medium simply called "questa forza," while in intimate spiritistic circles it took the form of deceased persons, more or less clumsily. In the same way, with controllers imbued with the idea of fraud as Messrs. Hodgson and Maskelyne were, the medium will remain under the empire of a suggestion of fraud.'

Without completely sharing Ochorowicz's conviction, I have reasons for thinking that his theory comes very close to the truth. I have myself indicated how *suggestible* the personification is.

There is something else. In cases where force is lacking, or is feeble, it is easier for the medium to obtain the phenomenon normally—that is to say, by fraud—rather than by veritable exteriorisation. I have remarked, that often the paranormal movement has to be normally simulated before it is supernormally realised. This is frequently the case with Eusapia. We can conceive how the movement of simulation can end in fraud, when the medium is in a hemisomnambulistic state.

In short, the energy which sets an object in movement appears to me to be of nervous origin, and I believe it to be of the same nature as that which provokes muscular contractions. Therefore, this is what follows: the force only becomes exteriorised if accumulated and wrought up to a sufficient tension. In proportion as its tension increases, so it tends to expend itself in the form of impulsive movements; the medium must resist this tendency to be able to obtain the pure phenomenon. Therefore experimenters ought to keep the medium in this resistance, and not allow him facility for expending the energy which tends to realise itself in muscular movements.

Such are the conclusions to which the observations I have made with several mediums have led me. Unconscious and involuntary fraud is frequent, and in order to avoid it, the conditions likely to favour it should be carefully put aside, especially in the beginning of a series of experiments, and when experimenting with an undeveloped medium. Medianity is powerfully influenced by acquired habits.

There exists, finally, another kind of unconscious and involuntary fraud: that which is due to illusion. It is constantly found in spiritistic seances, where ninety-nine times out of a hundred mediums produce no real phenomena. They are, nevertheless, in earnest, but they do not take into consideration the rôle of memory and imagination. This is particularly the case with *intuitive* writing mediums and 'control' mediums. With this order of phenomenon we rarely obtain verifiable indications; the 'spirits' utter plenty of commonplace generalities, but give no precise information.

Fraud is a misnomer in this case: being unconscious and involuntary, it cannot, correctly speaking, be called fraud; therefore it is better to reserve the word 'illusion' for it.

I cannot think of analysing the question of fraud in detail. If examined closely it is extremely complicated. But, like Richet, I deem 'it possible that in states bordering on trance, and in trance itself, the psychology of a medium may be very different from ours.' I confine myself simply to indicating the result of my reflections, which are the fruit of a long series of observations. Let me renew my oft-repeated recommendation for avoiding fraud: Experiment with light, the greatest possible amount of light, and seek for simple phenomena, difficult, perhaps, to obtain, but easy to observe, such as raps and movements without contact.

II. ERROR

If I insist so much upon the necessity, especially in the beginning, of seeking only for phenomena observation of which is easy, it is because error of observation is facile. We need to be much accustomed to seances to be able to distinguish rapidly between probable phenomena and those which are certainly tricked. It is with this, as with everything else, a question of time and reflection.

One of the causes of error, which it is highly important to avoid, is obscurity. For many simple phenomena darkness is unnecessary; therefore, from the very outset, we should exhort the personification to accept light. I have already frequently said that personifications are very suggestible. I know well it is not always so, and that at times the personification displays much obstinacy. Personifications of this class are especially observed with mediums who have long-acquired habits. It was so with Eusapia, who was only accustomed to giving dark seances. But even when the personification appears to have very decided ideas, it is possible, with a little ingenuity, to induce him to change. It is with them as with secondary personalities, or subjects to whom we have given a suggestion. We must enter right into the circle of suggested ideas in order to break it; it is a question of tact only.

With Eusapia we succeeded in operating in a good light by appealing to 'John's' vanity. We explained to him that obscurity stood in the way of the observation of the phenomena, that he was just as capable of working in the light as the 'guides' of other mediums were. In this way, we lead him to change his habits with us; the *meno luce* to which those who have experimented with this medium are accustomed, was still demanded, but only when the seance was well advanced. At Bordeaux, where there was a large bay-window in the seance-room, the reflection thereon from the lights burning in the kitchen and winter-garden enabled us to see a little. In that case, Eusapia or John did not desire total obscurity, and we always had this feeble light, allowing a visual control which was sometimes satisfactory.

When we are lucky enough to meet with an undeveloped medium, it is easy to give him the habit of operating in full light. This has occasionally happened to me.

I need not enlarge upon the influence of obscurity upon error. With some very rare exceptions we can never be certain of the authenticity of a phenomenon obtained in a dark seance.

Obscurity is, however, necessary for luminous phenomena. When once we have observed decided luminous forms, or really characteristic lights, it is easy to distinguish between them and illusion. A cool, calm observer does not make a mistake; it is not quite the same with excited experimenters. These latter give veritable suggestions to one another, and they end by having curious collective hallucinations. This is one of the most interesting facts of observation in spiritistic seances, so rich in purely psychological curiosities. I have frequently heard a sitter say that he saw a light in a given direction; the others looked in their turn and also saw it. Then one declared he perceived a form; soon others also saw a form. And from exclamation to exclamation the description of the form is completed. This is the genesis of a collective hallucination.

I need hardly say, that experimenters who are so suggestible are not good elements: in purely scientific researches they should be reduced to a minimum.

Personal experience has shown me, that of all the senses, that of sight is the most liable to imaginary impressions; after sight, the sense of touch is the most prompt to receive illusion. There are constant examples of this in spiritistic seances; the *cool breeze*, which is often really felt, is more often only imaginary. One person says he feels it; others at once imagine they feel it also. Sometimes it is not an error of imagination, but an error of attribution, the sensation of a cool breeze being caused by the breath.

The sense of hearing has seemed to me to be refractory to suggestion in seances, though it does not altogether escape. I know of very few examples of imagined raps or noises.

On the contrary, the muscular sense is one of the most unfaithful. Unless one has experimented oneself, it is impossible to imagine how frequent unconscious and involuntary movements are. These movements are of very feeble amplitude; they are slight, but they end by acquiring a certain amount of force. It will then be noticed that the assistants accuse each other reciprocally of pushing the table, and it is not rare to see angry discussions arise on these occasions. This is a frequent fact of observation. I have also very frequently noticed tactile hallucinations with impressionable experimenters, who easily imagine diverse contacts.

The sense of smell sometimes perceives imaginary odours, but it is somewhat rare. I have not observed any hallucinations of taste.

Another cause of error which requires pointing out is fatigue on the part of the experimenters. Every phenomenon which is produced after a long period of waiting stands many chances of being badly observed. The attention kept for a long time on the *qui vive* becomes weary, gives place to abstraction, and often the phenomena takes the experimenters by surprise; hence they are unable to examine the conditions with certitude. It is also bad to hold very long seances, fatigue quickly setting in.

Such are the principal causes of positive errors; that is to say, of errors tending to persuade one of the existence of an imaginary fact; negative errors, that is to say, those which tend to make one look upon a real fact as an imaginary one, are not less dangerous than positive errors.

In the first place, *parti pris* is to be pointed out. If we wish to experiment with success, we must experiment without credulity, without faith, even without confidence; but we must not be determined only to meet with fraud.

We must not experiment naïvely. If, at the beginning of a seance, it be useful to allow freedom in order to put the force *en train*, as Ochorowicz wisely recommends, once the phenomena are established, we must control them with the greatest care. But we should make our intentions known to the medium and to the personification. This, I think, is an indispensable precaution. The personification will always consent to it; but this does not mean we will always obtain the wished-for result. We must not allow the medium or the personification to think we are their dupes if they fraud; we must tell them, gently but clearly, that they are not giving anything good. Equivocation is to be carefully avoided, all misunderstanding is to be shunned.

We must not, however, place the medium under such conditions that the experiment cannot be realised. We do not understand these conditions, and, perhaps, apparently simple phenomena may not be realisable. I remember that at Choisy in 1896, a lady, a member of my family—she has an insurmountable bias against psychical experiments, which she declares *a priori* are fraudulent—declared to Eusapia that she would believe in her phenomena, if she could make a doll's table move before her eyes. Eusapia placed this small table on top of the seance-table, but did not succeed in making it move.

Why could not such an apparently simple phenomenon be obtained ?

We must, therefore, observe, but we must not wish to impose beforehand the conditions which the phenomenon should fulfil in order to be accepted.

Many experimenters tie up the medium, put him into a sack, and seal him therein. If he consents to this, well and good; if he refuses, other means of control must be found. We must not indeed suppose that the medium's refusal is always due to a desire to fraud. The slightest fetters may sometimes be very painful, especially when there be cutaneous hyperæsthesia.

Before bringing a negative judgment to bear upon the phenomena, the experimenters should always hold a certain number of seances, and should not found their judgment upon one bad seance alone ; by so doing they would expose themselves to a wrong course of action.

It is especially in psychical experimentation that inexhaustible patience is necessary.

CONCLUSION

And now my task is accomplished. I perceive that in the latter part of my work, I have broached complex and difficult problems, and have allowed myself to be drawn into — not theorising — but combating certain theories which appear to me to be incorrect or insufficient; for which I beg my reader's pardon. In conclusion, I wish to repeat that I am convinced of having, in a sure, positive manner, observed raps and movements without contact. I have seen many other phenomena; but I will not venture to be so affirmative concerning them, at present.

I make no pretension of demonstrating the reality of the facts I have observed. In publishing my conclusions, I have had but one object in view, that of bringing my testimony to those, who, long before me, attested to the facts which I in my turn affirm. Does that mean that I have not been mistaken? most assuredly, no! And it is very possible that my observations may have been imperfect. I am, nevertheless, so convinced of their exactness, that I can only advise those who may impugn the accuracy of my statements, to experiment as I have done, with the same method, and the same patience. I have had many occasions to pronounce these words in the course of my work, and now in terminating it, I pronounce them once again with stronger emphasis than ever.

I doubt, though, whether my voice will be heeded, where others, more influential than mine, have remained unheard. However, I do not regret having expressed my opinion about these facts. I am persuaded, that some day, *perhaps very soon*, they will come under scientific discipline, and this, in spite of all the obstacles which obstinacy and fear of ridicule accumulate in the way.

One of these obstacles, and it is not the least, is due to the fashion in which many savants estimate mediums. Their judgment is summed up in such expressions as hysteric, cheat, physically or morally tainted, degenerates. Such a judgment is iniquitous, absurd and false in its generality, and baneful in its consequences. It is founded upon a deplorable error, for I know mediums who possess faculties superior to the average, and who present absolutely no stigma of degeneracy. I have said, and I cannot repeat it too often, my finest phenomena were obtained with subjects who were sound and healthy in mind and body. It is with hysterical subjects that we observe fraud, side by side with gleams of true phenomena; but with a medium who has no nervous taint, whose well-balanced intelligence knows how to offer resistance to self-suggestion, and *l'idée fixe*, we have real phenomena or none at all.

The opinion of savants, who, ill acquainted with the facts, inform us that mediums are hysterics and victims of nervous disorders, is therefore erroneous; unfortunately the consequences of such an opinion are lamentable. I know many remarkable subjects who absolutely refuse to experiment outside a tested and restricted group, because they fear to be regarded as neurotics; they are afraid of being stigmatised as insane, they are afraid of compromising their commercial position or their professional interests. I will never succeed in convincing them that they are above the average; doubtless I will succeed still less in inducing others to believe it: though in many respects it be true. If the relative perfection of their nervous system renders these persons more sensitive than the average, it would be wrong to conclude thereupon, that they were degenerate specimens of humanity. This argument is lacking in common-sense; we might just as reasonably insist that Europeans are in degeneration, because they are more emotional and more sensitive to pain than certain savage tribes. How ignorant, tactless, and incautious we are! The attitude of certain learned centres—it is with intention that I do not say the most cultured—is, to me, similar to that of ecclesiastical authorities in the middle ages. The novelty of a thing frightens them. They treat independent scientific thought as the inquisitors treated free thought in days gone by. Like their prototypes of other times, they have the same intolerance, the same hate for schism and heresy. Their accumulated errors ought to make them cautious: but, no! If they no longer make a pariah of the arch-heretic or schismatic, if they no longer deliver him up to the executioner, they treat him with the same relative vigour. They excommunicate him, in their fashion, and cast him out of sane healthy humanity as a degenerate, a mystic, an *exalté*. The future will have the same opinion of them as we have, to-day, of their predecessors. Their attitude prevents the most cultured, the most capable mediums from allowing their psychic faculties to become known. If these mediums spoke of visions, a douche would be recommended! If they caused a table to move without contact, the words hysteria and fraud would be heard. Is it surprising they should hide their gifts?

We ought to consider mediums as precious beings, as forerunners of the future type of our race. Why should we only see degeneracy around us? Why should we not see superior beings ahead of us, beacons, as it were, on the route we have to follow? Does not simple common-sense suggest that humanity has not yet arrived at perfection—that it is evolving to-day just as it has always been doing? All men have not attained the same degree of evolution. As there are types representing the average state of former days, so there are advanced types representing to-day the average state of the future. The progress of the race seems to make for perfection along the lines of the nervous system, in the acquisition of more delicate senses, of greater nervous sensibility, and of vaster means of information. If the discovery of implements, new instruments of investigation, such as the telescope and microscope, for example, aid in the progress of the race, they are of no use for the evolution of the individual himself. Now, veritable progress is individual; it is the improvement of the individual which assures the evolution of the race, and this progress should be determined by heredity. Do what we will, we shall never be born with a microscope at the eyes, and a telephone at the ears. Progress of this kind is not transmissible; only physiological acquisitions are transmissible. The sensibility of the nervous system of mediums is a progress on our relative obtuseness; it is not the same thing with the bad sight of him who makes an improper use of the microscope. If Virchow were still alive, there would be many disagreeable things to be said to him, concerning the inaptitude of the ordinary type of savant to personify the desirable progress of the race towards health, force, sensibility, and the perfect form.

The intolerance of certain savants is equalled by that of certain dogmas. To take an example, Catholicism considers psychical phenomena as the work of the devil! Is it worth while at this hour to discuss so obsolete a theory? I think not. However, superior ecclesiastical authorities, with the tact and sentiment of opportunism which they often show, permit many Catholics to undertake the experimental study of psychical facts. I cannot blame them for recommending prudent abstention to the mass of the faithful; spiritism appears to me to be an adversary with which they will have to reckon very seriously some day. The simplicity of its doctrines ensures it the *clientèle* of simple souls enamoured of justice, that is to say, of the immense majority of mankind.

But this question is foreign to psychical facts themselves. As far as my experience permits me to judge of them, these phenomena contain nothing but what is natural. The devil does not show his hoof here, timorous souls may feel reassured; if the tables claim to be Satan himself, they need not be believed; summoned to prove his power, this grandiloquent Satan will be a sorry thaumaturgist. Religious prejudice, which proscribes these experiments as being supernatural, is just as little justified as scientific prejudice, which sees therein nothing but fraud and imposture. Here, again, the old adage of Aristotle finds its application : Justice lies midway.

May my book determine a few experimenters of goodwill to try to observe in their turn. May it help to dispel from the mind of gifted mediums their fears of being ranked with insane and disordered intelligences, or looked upon as being in partnership with the devil. May it especially contribute to make metapsychic phenomena come to be considered as natural facts, worthy of being usefully observed, and capable of enabling us to penetrate more deeply than any other phenomena into a real knowledge of the laws which govern Nature.

APPENDIX A

An Appreciation on Certain Documents published on the subject of Fraud.

THE question of fraud is so important that I feel I should not only give the results of my own observations, but also my appreciation of some of the principal documents published on the subject.

With the exception of Richet and a few others, representatives of science in France are very ill informed on this question, as I have endeavoured to show. They overlook the immense work which has been done in the United States and in England; consequently it is very difficult to discuss the question with these savants, they are either ignorant or feign to be ignorant of what others have done. I have shown that their experiments are defective and their methods open to criticism.

If all serious discussion be impossible with certain savants, it is not so with those who have taken the trouble to verify psychic phenomena for themselves. This is the case with the principal members of the Society for Psychical Research, Crookes, Lodge, Barrett, Myers, Sidgwick, Gurney, Podmore, Hodgson, Hyslop, and others. The first three are persuaded of the reality of the facts observed by them. The others have a tendency to attribute to fraud all *physical* phenomena; they admit, on the other hand, *intellectual* phenomena, and explain them either by telepathy as Mr. Podmore does, or by the intervention of spirits as spiritists themselves do, though they were at one time the latter's adversaries; this is notably the case with Myers, Hodgson, and Hyslop. The great respect I have for the remarkable men who direct the Society for Psychical Research, obliges me to examine their experiments very carefully, for their judgment has a great value in my eyes; at the same time, I have too much regard for the research of truth to conceal from them the errors of experimentation, which they appear to me to have committed.

In the fourth volume of the *Proceedings* will be found a series of papers by Mrs. Sidgwick, Messrs. Lewis, Hodgson, and Davey upon fraud. The last-named deal particularly with the production of direct slate-writing. This phenomenon is very easy to simulate; it suffices to read the papers mentioned, especially Davey's document, to understand under what suspicious conditions the phenomenon was produced.

A long time ago I myself artificially produced this kind of manifestation by fixing a pencil into a hole in the table, and thereupon moving the slate about. With practice a certain amount of facility can be acquired; you can write fairly well and give regularity to apparently spasmodic and involuntary movements; but only inexperienced or credulous people are taken in by this trick; and though they may be more complicated, Mr. Davey's methods are not by any means more difficult to expose.

I wonder how a man of Dr. Hodgson's intelligence could have based his judgment upon such superficial observations as those of the experimenters he cites. Here are men, without doubt honourable and well educated, who hold seances with the object of obtaining direct slate-writing through Mr. Davey. Instead of taking the elementary precaution of never abandoning their slates, they allow the medium to manipulate them, permit him to leave the seance-room for a moment, consent to allow other slates than their own to remain on the table at the same time as those which are used for the experiment, and lastly when they examine, only examine it on one side. This is not mal-observation, it is absence of observation. (See R. Hodgson, 'Mr. Davey's Imitations by Conjuring of Phenomena sometimes attributed to Spirit Agency,' *Proceedings*, vi. 253.)

Mr. Davey has also produced raps and materialisations fraudulently. It is necessary to read, in Dr. Hodgson's paper, the conditions under which he operated to see what ill-placed confidence his co-experimenters had in him (Davey). They do not verify, although they are invited to do so, the contents of a trunk precisely where the material essential to fraud was concealed; they allow Mr. Davey to close the door of the room: he gives two turns of the key, the one locking, the other unlocking the door, which is carelessly sealed with gummed paper; no one thinks of verifying if the door is well closed. The most elementary precautions are neglected by the assistants who, one would really think, had been chosen by Mr. Davey for their very credulity. Frauds as easy to prevent as those from which Dr. Hodgson draws his argument, cannot be considered as being able to take in a prudent, shrewd observer, accustomed to experimentation, and knowing how to preserve a little *sang-froid*. Was it not enough that the medium should have asked one of the observers: 'What do you want the spirit to write on the slate? In what colour do you want the writing to appear?' for these very questions alone to suggest imposture? Dr. Hodgson's argumentation is inoperative, and the faults, accumulated by the deceived observers whose impressions he cites, are excessive. One would think he had had to do with very convinced spiritists, inclined to admit *a priori* the reality of the forthcoming phenomena without troubling themselves about the precise conditions of their observations; this is what the perusal of the reports of these seances makes one think, for I read textually (p. 296): 'It may be interesting to compare the reports given by spiritualists of a sitting with Mr. Davey with his account of what really occurred.' Can one draw an argument from these accounts of spiritists? Some spiritists, convinced of the reality of the facts, appear to care very little indeed about any sort of control. To reason from their methods of observation, to generalise this reasoning and to extend it to all observers, is rather too easy a form of discussion.

There are certain phenomena which lend themselves badly to observation: this is particularly the case with those which require obscurity and arrangements of a nature likely to hinder or interfere with the best control which can be exercised, that of the eyesight. In my opinion the phenomenon has no demonstrative value whenever it occurs out of sight, as is the case with slate-writing, when the slate is held under the table. Neither has it any great signification when it requires sustained observation in order to control it. Errors are easy, for abstraction almost inevitably follows, if it does not accompany, sustained attention. Hodgson, in 'The Possibilities of Mal-Observation and Lapse of Memory from a Practical Point of View' (*Proceedings*, iv. 381) gives examples of this, but his paper only points out facts well known to those who are familiar with human testimony. In order to observe with a minimum chance of error, the phenomenon we intend to study should be simple, and repeated often enough to prevent the attention from becoming weary from waiting. From this point of view, the production of raps and telekinetic movements with the aid of the experimental manœuvres I have described, permit, by specifying the moment when the phenomenon is going to occur, of bringing the whole attention to bear upon the examination of the conditions under which the phenomenon is obtained. Raps and movements without contact appear to me to lend themselves admirably to observation; with these phenomena, by operating as I have indicated, experimentation is almost possible; but a veritable medium must be sought for in the first instance.

Now this is what my colleagues of the Society for Psychical Research did, but they did so under conditions which were far from satisfactory. Mrs. Sidgwick, a woman of brilliant intellect, has given an account of the attempts made by herself, her husband, and friends to obtain psychical phenomena. They went to Eglinton and Slade for slate-writing, to the Misses Wood and Fairlamb and a Mr. Haxby for materialisations. The first two gave phenomena which were suspicious, not to say worse; as for Haxby, he frauded shamefacedly. Mrs. Sidgwick's account is demonstrative on this point, and it is enough to read it to be convinced that no shrewd observer could be taken in.

The first mistake, committed by the distinguished members of the Sidgwick group, was to suppose that psychical phenomena can be obtained at will. Whenever a paid medium gives regular seances, there are a hundred chances to one of downright fraud. If there be a positive feature in these supernormal facts, that feature in my opinion is their apparent irregularity. I have been able to experiment with intelligent, well-educated mediums anxious for a thorough investigation of their powers: I have made very many experiments with them, and I have observed that often whole weeks passed away without a good seance; at other times, the force was so abundant that phenomena were forthcoming without seance. I have related some curious facts in this respect, *e.g.* the table moving spontaneously in the course of a conversation bearing upon psychical phenomena (p. 106).

What are the conditions which impede or favour the production of this unknown mode of energy? I cannot specify them; but I think I have noticed concordances, which confirm in a measure the conclusions of Ochorowicz (*Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, vi. 115):—

1. Action of temperature. Dry cold weather is the most favourable. Damp or close weather is most unfavourable.

2. Health of the medium and sitters. If the medium does not feel well, things happen as though he exteriorised no force whatever. It is the same thing with the sitters, but in a lesser degree; in the latter case it suffices to eliminate the experimenter who feels ill.

3. Mental condition of the medium and sitters.[1] Ill-humour, anxiety, sadness—especially a sadness without any specific cause, a kind of mental discomfort—are prejudicial. Joy, gaiety are often favourable.

4. Nervous exhaustion. This condition is too often overlooked. I have not unfrequently had occasion to conduct several series of experiments at one and the same time. I generally noticed that the results were not good. I have not been able to

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[1] There are *apparent* exceptions to this rule.

understand the cause of this want of success; it is probably other than that of simple nervous exhaustion, although this may have an action in prolonged series of seances.

Neither do seances held too frequently with the same medium give good results; in this case, nervous exhaustion is certainly in play.

The English experimenters do not appear to have taken these diverse elements into consideration; I am persuaded the results of their investigations would have been different had they shunned 'paid mediums,' and sought for fresh or undeveloped mediums, persons uninfluenced by private considerations, intelligent and capable of bringing a correct analysis of their subjective impressions into the research. These mediums are rare, but they are to be found.

None of these conditions were fulfilled by the Sidgwick group. These experimenters, acting with the best of intentions, took a wrong course. Eglinton, Slade, Haxby, have perhaps been genuine mediums in their time, but as soon as they made it a business to give regular seances, they were at once prepared to give fraudulent phenomena with regularity. At Newcastle, the group operated at one and the same time with Miss Fairlamb and with Miss Wood. These two parallel series of experiments could not help being prejudicial one to the other, even if these two mediums had been honest, which does not appear to have been the case, judging from Mrs. Sidgwick's account.

I cannot think of discussing in detail all the experiments of the Sidgwick group; but I will study their experiments with Eusapia Paladino at Cambridge more carefully, for their judgment on this medium appears to me unjustified. Every one knows under what conditions Messrs. Myers, Hodgson, Sidgwick, etc., invited Eusapia to England, in order to resume experiments previously made with her at Ribaud. These experiments had obtained a favourable report from Dr. Lodge; Mr. Myers and Mr. Sidgwick associated themselves with Dr. Lodge's conclusions. Dr. Hodgson—who is a doctor of law and not a doctor of medicine, as some people suppose—criticised the experiments summarised by Dr. Lodge. He was met with the reply that his criticisms contained nothing new ; that what he said had been already pointed out by Richet and others, and that the experimenters were acquainted with every possible system of fraud ; that the substitution of one hand for another, the substitution of an artificial foot for the medium's foot, were well-known systems of imposture, against which every precaution had been taken. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the fact that the report had been drawn up by such competent men as Richet, Ochorowicz, Lodge, and Myers, it was criticised with an undeniable appearance of logic and justice by Hodgson : the latter reproached them for insufficiently describing the manner in which the diverse controls were ensured, for omitting to dwell upon the precautions which were taken, and for the lack of a minute description of all the movements of the medium. In his article (*Journal*, vii. 49) he expressly says :—

'Professor Lodge makes the following declaration concerning the raising of the table :—

'"It appears to me impossible for any person to lift a table of this size and weight while standing up to it, with hands only on top, without plenty of leg action, and considerable strength and pressure of hands. It was quite beyond the possibility of Eusapia."

'Now let us suppose,' continues Hodgson, 'that Eusapia used a form of support which, with some variation or other, I fancy is not altogether unknown in the Italian race. Let us suppose that she had, next to her body, a light strong band round her shoulders and across her chest, with a pendant attached of a black band or cord, with a hook or other catch at the end which could be tucked out of sight in her dress front when not in use. (By the way, in a photograph which I have seen of Eusapia at a sitting, when the table is supposed to be completely off the floor, one of the buttons of the bosom of her dress seems to be unfastened.)

'She fixed this catch—either stooping or bending her legs slightly outward—to one of the sideboards of the table, or to some point in the neighbourhood of the junctures of, for example, sideboards and top of table. She straightened herself out, stiffened her shoulders and her body back, and pushed forward with her foot against the leg of the table, close to which she was standing. The light touch of one of her hands may have helped to steady the table, the edge of which may also have been in contact with her body. Was this hypothesis or any kindred hypothesis tested by Professor Lodge?' etc.

This long quotation shows how Hodgson reasons. Conscientious savants omitted to indicate, explicitly, in their report, that every hypothesis of fraud had been studied and put to one side; they omitted to analyse each hypothesis, because their implicit affirmation of the reality of the fact appeared sufficient to them, and a detailed examination of each hypothesis would have given exaggerated dimensions to their report. No matter. Analysts like Dr. Hodgson will not spare them, and will not hesitate to indicate hypotheses, even those the least compatible with the conditions of observation.

However, the Cambridge experiments were decided upon, and although Hodgson had taken a decided stand in the matter, he was invited to assist. These experiments gave bad results, and Sidgwick was able to say, in spite of the contrary observations of other experimenters, who were his colleagues in the Society for Psychical Research (*Journal S. P. R.*, vii. 230): 'It will be seen that at our last meeting a question was asked with regard to "phenomena" obtained by Eusapia Paladino subsequent to the exposure of her frauds at Cambridge. It may be well that I should briefly state why I do not intend to give any account of these phenomena.

'It has not been the practice of the Society for Psychical Research to direct attention to the performances of any so-called "medium" who has been proved guilty of systematic fraud. Now, the investigation at Cambridge, of which the results are given in the *Journal* for November 1895, taken in connection with an article by Professor Richet in the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, for January-February 1893, placed beyond reasonable doubt the facts that the frauds discovered (*sic*) by Dr. Hodgson at Cambridge, had been systematically practised by Eusapia Paladino for years. In accordance, therefore, with our established custom, I propose to ignore her performances for the future, as I ignore those of other persons engaged in the same mischievous trade.'

Such a judgment made a considerable and lamentable stir: if it were exact, it was just to pronounce it; if it were not thoroughly exact, Sidgwick should have suspended his verdict. This is what Myers advised—this is what Lodge and Richet advised. But the experimenters who followed Hodgson's impulse did not do this. They made a mistake, and subsequent events have proved they were wrong.

I have said that their judgment was not quite accurate. Professor Sidgwick said, addressing a general meeting of the Society for Psychical Research on the 11th October 1895 (*Journal S. P. R.*, vii. 131):—

'I consider it to be proved beyond a doubt that the medium used systematic trickery throughout this series of sittings. Her *modus operandi* I will leave to Dr. Hodgson to describe, who—though only present during a part of the sittings—has had better opportunities for personally observing the actual process of fraud. When this trickery was discovered, the greater part of the phenomena offered as supernormal at these sittings were at once explained; and, this being so, I think it, in the circumstances, unreasonable to attribute—even hypothetically—to supernormal agency the residuum that was not so easily explicable. And considering the great general resemblance between the performances of the medium at these sittings and those I witnessed last year, I am now disposed to think that my earlier experiences are to be similarly explained; I therefore wish to withdraw altogether the limited and guarded support which I gave last year to the supernormal pretensions of Eusapia Paladino.'

So Sidgwick declares that his former experiments were null and void, as everything could be explained by trickery!

Hodgson, at that same general meeting, explained the means used by Eusapia, the surreptitious freeing of foot and hand, and some simple apparatus such as a handkerchief and a small object, such as a coin or a piece of paper, covered with some phosphorescent preparation. Hodgson—and Myers reminded him of this—forgot to say that he had invented nothing, and that these trick devices had been discovered and previously pointed out by others, notably by Richet, who has often experimented with Eusapia Paladino. Sidgwick remarks that a portion of the phenomena are not easily explicable by fraud. It would have been interesting to know which. I suspect that certain levitations were among the number of these phenomena. But the notes published in the *Journal S. P. R.*, vii. 148, only mention *attouchements*, and it is advisable to limit the discussion to this fact, though it appears to me the least demonstrative.

Let us take the seance of the 1st September. We read p. 153: '7.25.—R. H. says, phenomenon preparing. *Enormous hand shaking Mrs. M.'s head, hand clearly felt.* H. S., hand well held, but not completely. R. H. has hand completely held, gap and then grasp again. Hand holds H. S. well. Right hand, thumb and finger clutch R. H. (On nearly all occasions after the first few hand-touch phenomena, I informed the sitters of a coming phenomenon in some such words as that a phenomenon was preparing, before the phenomenon actually occurred, and usually immediately prior to its occurrence. I made this announcement as a rule when I felt the right hand leaving mine, but sometimes when I felt it preparing to leave. After the phenomenon was over, and the hand returned, I described usually what I felt at the moment of my description, so that E. might not become aware, through some partial appreciation of my English, that I knew that her hand was away from mine during the production of the phenomenon. In some cases, when it was necessary, I added a few words about the state of holding during the phenomenon.)'

I confess that I do not understand. Hodgson has shown himself so severe for others, that he will not be annoyed with me for exacting the same precision from him that he requires of others. Now, in the passage quoted, we read: first, that Mrs. Myers is touched by an enormous hand, a hand which is 'clearly felt.' Either it is Eusapia's hand, released by Hodgson, in which case it ought to be *small*, for Eusapia's hand is small, or Mrs. Myers did not 'clearly feel' the hand which shook her. If Mrs. Myers has correctly described her impression, then Hodgson makes a mistake in seeming to indicate that it is Eusapia's hand which touched Mrs. M.; if not, then Mrs. M. has made a mistake. At any rate, there is a contradiction here between the two observers.

Sidgwick acknowledges that Eusapia's tricks do not explain everything, yet he allows Hodgson to expatiate complacently upon fraudulent *attouchements*. The learned lawyer even mimicked Eusapia's tricks for freeing her hands and feet before members of the Society for Psychical Research. But all this was already known by Continental specialists. Hodgson had invented nothing; why did he confine himself to partial criticisms? why did he not discuss each fact, and especially those which appeared inexplicable? He is very severe with Eusapia; why not treat her as he treats Mrs. Piper? He carefully discusses the Neapolitan's errors and attempts; but does he think that there is no conscious or unconscious fraud with the American medium, and that defunct Phinuit is alone responsible for the inaccuracies and falsehoods observed in Mrs. Piper's mediumship, whilst Eusapia's fraud is conscious and voluntary?

As far as his experiments with Eusapia Paladino are concerned, I will reply to him that, in a great measure, he and his friends were responsible for her frauds, and almost wholly responsible for the failure of the experiments. They appear to have neglected the psychological side of a medium's rôle, and forgot that a medium is not a mechanical instrument.

Eusapia was not at her ease, and, if my memory serves me right, she found the Cambridge centre rather disdainful and haughty, save Mr. and Mrs. Myers. She was dull and lonely. I think she was not admitted to the same table. But I will not affirm this detail; it seems to me she told me, she was usually served apart from the members of the household.

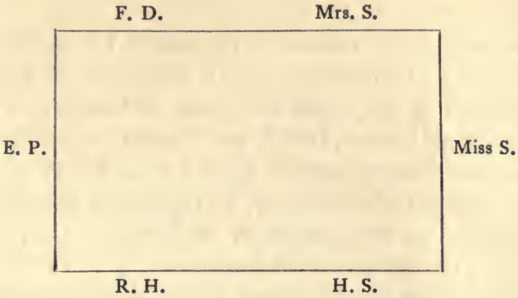
The seances were too numerous (there were twenty seances held in less than seven weeks—a seance every other day) if we take into consideration her not being very well, and consequently unfit for anything for a few days. This was making sure of bad results, especially as the seances sometimes lasted two and a half to three hours. It was impossible for the medium to recruit her strength physically or morally, especially in a country where the manners, life, language, and even the cooking were so different from those at Naples. She was not well when in England. Was she long ill? I cannot say; but I can affirm that she did not go home satisfied.

It appears, however, that the first seances were pretty good; there were some suspicious things, as is often the case with Eusapia. Hodgson's arrival changed everything: it was then that fraud was discovered, but a long time after Richet and Toselli had pointed it out.

How did Hodgson go to work? He appears to have conceived the singular idea not to control Eusapia at all, and to leave at her free disposal the hand he was supposed to hold. Every time he ceased to feel the contact of her hand, he announced a phenomenon; the phenomenon produced, he related his impressions in *English* to his co-experimenters. These were two capital mistakes. The first passed even unconscious fraud: for though severe control sometimes stops the phenomena, at least it effectually prevents trickery. The second, by arousing Eusapia's jealous susceptibility, was bound to worry and irritate her. These considerations may appear to be secondary to persons, who are not acquainted with the difficulties which the observation of psychical phenomena present; those who are familiar with them will not gainsay me. However, if the Cambridge experimenters had not gone any further than this, we might excuse them, and simply consider they had blundered touching the necessary conditions; but they went further. They invited to the seances Messrs. Maskelyne, father and son. These men, the well-known directors of the Egyptian Hall in London, have made it a speciality of producing by conjuring the phenomena called 'spiritistic.'

Mr. Maskelyne, senior, did not conceal his bias, to judge by his letters in the *Daily Chronicle* (29th Oct. 1895, and following days). This conjurer explained certain levitations in a singular fashion. A small table had been carried on to the seance-table. According to Maskelyne, Eusapia had seized it with her teeth by bending backwards, and by this feat of dental strength had herself carried and placed the smaller table on the larger one! Mr. Maskelyne felt the movement, just as Dr. Hodgson felt he had lost the contact of the hand, when a phenomenon was going to be produced. From this negative observation, Mr. Maskelyne, like Hodgson, deducts the positive conclusion, that the phenomenon was normally and fraudulently produced. I retain Mr. Maskelyne's affirmation, that the backward movement Eusapia made when the small table was carried on to the larger one, revealed her method to him. Hodgson has the same impression as the conjurer. In concluding as they do, they both forget this circumstance, often observed with the Italian medium, that synchronous movements of her limbs accompany the phenomenon. If Mr. Maskelyne is excusable in not having studied and examined this circumstance, Dr. Hodgson, well acquainted with psychical matters, is unpardonable in having neglected it. This omission is a fundamental gap in his reasoning; and I think it robs it of all serious value.

Let us take another example in the rare indications given by the Cambridge experimenters (Extracts from report of seance of 1st Sept. 1895, *Journal*, vii. 151-153):—['The Report consists of notes taken by Mr. Myers at the time from the dictation of the sitters, with supplementary statements added by some of the sitters afterwards; these are placed in square brackets, and all except those to which Mrs. Sidgwick's initials are appended were written by Dr. Hodgson on Sept. 2nd and 3rd. The italics refer to the descriptions of phenomena, the ordinary type to the conditions of holding, etc.]. [Sitters arranged as follows:—



'Mrs. Myers goes under the table, has the medium's feet on palms of hands far apart.]

'7. 6. *Three knocks* [which sounded as if made on the top of the table]. Right hand lies across R. H. and holds H. S.'s three fingers with at least two. Left hand holds F. D. and Mrs. S. Three movements made with left hand beforehand. Knees not moved and feet held tight. [Medium was asked to repeat this phenomenon.]

'7. 7. *Three knocks*, *rather loud and dull* [resembling the preceding]. Right hand moving, holding H. S.'s and R. H.'s. Left hand well off the table; holding satisfactory, held by F. D. and Mrs. S. Feet well held, knees not moved.

'[Both series of three knocks were doubtless produced by Eusapia's head. On the second occasion, I succeeded in getting her head between me and a slight light from the curtains behind, and observed the motion of her head part of the way forward and back. She moved her right hand, with H. S.'s hand and mine, forward, outward, and upward somewhat, and possibly made a similar movement with her left hand, thus giving herself a free space to bend her head forward and down, and at the same time having the hands which were holding hers, in a position from which it would be more difficult to grab.] [And had practically six hands out of the way of an accidental contact with her head. E. M. S.].'

Such is the *procès-verbal.* Dr. Hodgson, I repeat, has been so severe with others, that he will forgive me for being exigent with him.

Is it admissible to reason in this way? to consider that she has, *perhaps*, made a movement with the left hand similar to the one effected with the right hand, and afterwards to hold that supposition as a demonstrated fact? Should he not have remembered that such a movement, in a big woman like Eusapia, cannot be easily made without her arms betraying the movement of the spinal column, and the muscles of the neck, without the knees revealing the movement of the body?

Now, the knee did not move; and Hodgson points out no movement of the arm.

The movement of the head might have been one of those synchronous movements of which I have spoken. Dr. Hodgson has omitted to consider this hypothesis.

To sum up, limiting ourselves simply to published documents, we see that the English experimenters paid no attention to the conditions under which it is expedient to operate, that they tired out the medium, surrounded her with elements of suspicion, encouraged her to fraud—Dr. Hodgson especially—and finally concealed from her the severe judgment they had formed about her. As Richet says, the Cambridge experiments prove only one thing, which is, that in that particular series of seances Eusapia frauded with her well-known methods, but it is rash to conclude thereupon that she has always frauded.[1]

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[1] '*A Cambridge Eusapia pendant une série de séances a fraudé avec ses procédés connus.* Voilà la première conclusion. Et voici la seconde. *En mettant Eusapia dans l'impossibilité de frauder, pendant cette même série d'expériences de Cambridge, Eusapia n'a pas pu produire un seul phénomène vrai* . . .

'Il me paraît qu'il est téméraire de conclure que tous les phénomènes produits ou présumés produits par Eusapia sont faux. . . . Sous des influences morales et psychologiques dont la nature nous échappe, pendant un très long temps Eusapia est incapable de pouvoir exercer une action vraie quelconque, et peut-être, à Cambridge elle s'est trouvée dans ces conditions . . . J'en conclus qu'il n'y a encore rien de démontré, ni dans un sens, ni dans l'autre, et qu'il faut courageusement poursuivre la recherche ; et expérimenter encore.'—CHARLES RICHET. (*Journal S. P. R.*, vii. 179.)

The analysis of the documents published permits me to ascertain :—

1. Demonstration of fraud in certain hypothetical cases.
2. Omission to indicate if the medium was conscious or in trance.
3. Omission to discuss phenomena non-explicable by fraud.
4. Apparent contradiction between Dr. Hodgson's statements and those of other experimenters.
5. Omission to analyse if Eusapia's suspicious movements were not muscular movements synchronous with the phenomena. This omission is capital, and demonstrates the relative inexperience of the Cambridge group.
6. Evident bias of Dr. Hodgson, who had taken up a decided stand, and treated Eusapia's phenomena as fraudulent before having seen them.

In a word, the Cambridge experimenters operated under bad conditions: they could not obtain any good results by acting as they did. But, even under these wretched conditions, they ought to have received some veridical phenomena, and the reading of their publications leads us to presume they did receive some. In any case, their report does not demonstrate that everything was explicable by fraud, and is not sufficient to justify the sweeping judgment they brought to bear upon Eusapia Paladino.

Now, if we compare the Cambridge results with those obtained by other experimenters, the conclusion we draw from these documents becomes more precise. I refer my readers to the reports of the experiments at Milan (*Ann. des Sc. Psych.*, 1893), and at l'Agnélas (*Ibid.* 1896). I will only dwell upon my personal experience with Eusapia. I experimented with this medium in 1895, 1896, and 1897, and I obtained undeniable phenomena with her.

Like other Continental experimenters, I tried to put Eusapia at her ease, to win her confidence and sympathy ; and the results of my seances were convincing.

At l'Agnélas, out of seance hours, and in full light, I saw the table raised to the height of my forehead. Every one was standing up, Eusapia's hands were held and seen ; her left hand, held by me, rested on the right angle of the table.

At Choisy, in 1897, we received doubtful phenomena, notably the *apport* of a carnation which appeared most suspicious to us ; but we spoke openly of our doubts to Eusapia. At other times the phenomena were of extraordinary intensity. One afternoon, Sunday, 11th October, all the sitters, even those furthest away from the medium, were touched.

But it was at Bordeaux, perhaps, in 1897 that the phenomena were most intense. I find in my notes—which are not, and make no claim to be, reports—the following recital :—

'P. is vigorously touched. Eusapia gives him the control of her hands and feet. P. receives slaps in the back every time Eusapia presses his foot. The noise is distinctly heard. P.'s chair is shaken and drawn from under him. Eusapia rubs her feet on the floor, to give fluid, she says. Finally P.'s chair is slowly carried on to the seance-table. The persons (Dr. Denucé, Madame A., and I) for whom P. is between the table and the window (a light from outside streams through the Persian shutters) see the chair very clearly outlined on the window (a large bay, six feet wide). After having been placed on the table, the chair is taken back to the floor, and, a second time, carried on to the table. The movements were slowly produced; while they were being produced, the hands, feet, and head of the medium were under control. If any part of the medium's body had touched the chair, the contact would have been seen on the silhouette of the chair, the latter standing out well against the lighted-up window. While the chair is in movement P. is crouching down on his heels; he is touched on the back, his garments are pulled, he is tickled ; at the same time the table is levitated. *These three manifestations were produced simultaneously.*'

This phenomenon is, perhaps, the most convincing Eusapia has given me in demi-obscurity ; it was impossible to produce these three manifestations simultaneously with a free hand and foot (admitting there had been substitution): knowing the possible frauds, I had indicated to my co-experimenters Eusapia's ordinary tricks. Moreover, Dr. Denucé and P., a barrister at Bordeaux, were both *au courant* with the usual frauds, and were experienced experimenters. I draw special attention to the visibility of the chair suspended in the air. We only saw the outline of the chair, but we saw it plainly.

Here is another levitation obtained under conditions which exclude every device pointed out by Messrs. Hodgson and Maskelyne: teeth, strap, hook, foot, hand holding the table, pressure of the knees, etc. :—

'Afterwards Eusapia makes us get up. She pulls the table into the centre of the room (telling us she is doing this herself). She invites M. to hold her feet; M. goes under the table. Eusapia becomes impatient, and says to him "*dietro*" because the table would hurt her; M. stoops down behind Eusapia, and seizes her by the feet. Eusapia then says she is going to raise the table without touching it. A circle is made around the table, which, after several oscillations, rises up vertically. The top of the table reaches as high as our foreheads.

'A second time the table is levitated under the same conditions, and to the same height. The experimenters are all standing up around the table, and no hand at all touches it.'

The table stood out plainly against the window. It would have been easy to see the limb or instrument which was in contact with it, had there been any such contact.

Professor Sidgwick 'often asked Eusapia—or rather John—to favour him with a hand-grasp when he was holding the two hands of the medium in his two hands, since he regarded this as the only mode of holding the hands which could ever be perfectly satisfactory to him.' He solicited in vain. Now we obtained this phenomenon frequently :—

'Eusapia takes Dr. D.'s two hands, and gives him her two hands to control. Under these conditions Dr. D. is touched. Eusapia does the same thing with P., who is several times touched.'

Here are some phenomena obtained with a bright green light. 'One side of the table rises up, followed by two good levitations: the table is levitated to a height of about one foot six inches, and remains from two to three seconds in the air. Eusapia's hands are well controlled and visible; her feet do not move. The feet of the table (visible to me) are not in contact with Eusapia's dress during the levitation. I see the dress distinctly; it is motionless. When the levitation took place no hand was touching the table.'

Finally, here is a crucial experiment, an account of which M. de Rochas has published in the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques* in 1898. At that moment I still suspended my judgment, not that my opinion with regard to the phenomena produced by Eusapia and verified by me was uncertain, but because I wished to study other mediums before pronouncing my judgment. My studies are now sufficiently complete, from the point of view of the observation of these facts, to permit me to declare my opinion. The reasons of prudence, which led me to beg M. de Rochas to withhold my name from his report, no longer exist. Here is the extract from my notes made at the time of the experiment:—

'I had bought, during the day, a letter-balance, which I brought to the seance. Eusapia makes us sit for two or three minutes with our hands on the table. Then she approaches her hands to the letter-balance, placing her left hand on top of Dr. D.'s right hand. Dr. D. mentions the sensation of a cold breeze, which ceases and recommences. Eusapia's hands are at about fifteen centimetres away from the letter-balance. She makes two or three ascending and descending movements with her hands, palm directed downwards. At the second movement the letter-balance is pushed to the limit of its course, requiring for this a force of more than one hundred and seventy grammes. Eusapia takes P.'s left hand, and tries the experiment with him. She asks if he feels the cool breeze. In a few seconds P. feels it over the third and fourth fingers. (P.'s left hand is under the medium's right hand.) The tray is lowered, and the hand stops at the division 20.

'Eusapia takes Dr. D's hand again. She forms a triangle with her hands. Dr. D. has always his right hand in Eusapia's left. The latter's hands are about fifteen centimetres away from one another, and about ten centimetres away from the edge of the apparatus. The tray of the latter is lowered; the hand marks 90 grammes, and *slowly* returns to 0; in the two preceding experiments it had returned abruptly.

'Eusapia tries to raise the scale. She directs her hands palms upwards. The scale raises itself.

'P. puts a black pocket-book weighing seventy grammes on the tray. Eusapia begins the last experiment over again. After two or three movements of her hands, palms upwards, the tray is raised to its uttermost limit.'

These experiments were made in a good green light.

In conclusion, we never hesitated to act openly with Eusapia, telling her what we thought. For example, at one time, in obscurity, Eusapia drew the table to her without announcing it was she who did it. P. immediately said: 'It is the medium who's drawing the table.' Eusapia was not annoyed, and said that P. was right to speak of what he noticed.

These experiments at Choisy and Bordeaux, in the course of which there were both good and bad seances, convinced me that I had not been the victim of illusion at l'Agnélas in M. de Rochas' house.

My judgment will convince no one. In such matters we must see for ourselves in order to be convinced. Mr. Hodgson himself knows this to-day. My testimony contradicts formally and explicitly the conclusions of the Cambridge investigators. Eusapia does not always defraud; with us, she rarely defrauded.

Let me terminate this discussion with Richet's words: 'Malgré les apparences qui sont en effet souvent contre Eusapia, je ne suis fixé en aucune manière sur ce que j'ai appelé jusqu'ici fraude. . . . Il est possible, que dans l'état de trance, ou dans les états voisins, la psychologie d'un médium soit très différente de la nôtre.'

APPENDIX B

I HAVE criticised somewhat lengthily M. Janet's opinions: will the reader kindly allow me to make yet another incursion into scientific ground. For it is perhaps necessary to reply to some objections which are advanced—doubtless in all sincerity—by certain savants who are either ill informed, or lacking in adequate knowledge of the subject. Professor Grasset of the university of Montpellier, for whose talent and earnestness I have the greatest respect, has just published a long article entitled *Le Spiritisme et la Science* in the last volume of his *Leçons de clinique médicale* (t. iv., 1903, p. 374). He begins by stating that he is going to take Janet as his guide, because the latter's 'luminous ideas are and remain for him the sole scientific basis now existing of these questions.' Though we see it in print, this assertion is so extraordinary, that we wonder if we be not dreaming when reading it. Professor Grasset, then, is going to take Janet as a guide, Janet who has never seen anything! It makes one think of the fable, only, this time, it is the blind man who climbs on the paralytic's back. Grasset is going to deal with matters of such importance, so prolific probably in new and unexpected consequences, without consulting the writers who have described the phenomena he is going to study! The authors from whose works he quotes—Jules Bois, Papus, Péladan, Mme. de Thébes, Léo Taxil!—have more to do with the charms of fancy than with the gravity of science. The task of refuting their assertions is far too easy a one, and the learned professor ought to have chosen other and better representatives of psychical research. His argumentation falls short of the mark.

Professor Grasset's case is, however, instructive. I consider him as one of our best-informed scientists, and he seems to look upon psychical research without prejudice. Nobody can doubt his earnestness, his learning, his talent; but, in spite of these qualities, he shows himself to be unfamiliar with the serious work which has been done, and which is being done in psychical matters. When he quotes Myers, he misquotes him. When he discusses the Piper case, he sums up the account given of the case by M. Mangin in the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, and does not say a word of the careful reports drawn up by Hodgson and Hyslop. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, if the professor's statements do not agree with the facts. He does not appear to have studied either the original reports or M. Sage's remarkable summary of these reports.

Professor Grasset simply says: 'Four months after the death of Mr. Robinson (George Pelham), Mrs. Piper gave a seance in the house of one of Mr. Robinson's friends and fell into a trance.' [A slight mistake, the seance took place at Mrs. Piper's.] 'P., the secondary personality, said that George Robinson was ready to communicate; and henceforth this spirit took part in Mrs. Piper's seances as another familiar spirit. Such an example shows how *polygonal* incarnations are formed during the medium's trance.'

And no more! Professor Grasset does not see the real problem: did the medium show any knowledge of facts known only to the deceased? This is the problem. The mode of formation of the secondary personality is but an accessory question.

This kind of reasoning is common to savants. They keep aloof from the real psychological problem, and only discuss its side issues. I am sorry to see a man of Professor Grasset's worth fall into the usual errors, and pronounce a judgment upon facts before thoroughly acquainting himself with those facts.

Professor Grasset speaks of *spiritisme scientifique* as belonging to the realm of biology, and demanding the serious attention of scientists. But why speak of spiritism? Spiritism is a religion, it is not a science; it is the *systematic explanation* of the *ensemble* of certain facts, so far very ill understood, but it is not the assertion of those facts. Are the alleged facts true? That is the question which biology has to examine. Spiritism, on the contrary, that is to say, the *ensemble* of metaphysical doctrines founded upon the revelations of spirits, cannot be considered, at least for the present, as belonging to biology. I beg Professor Grasset not to confound the impartial, unbiased research for scientific truth with spiritism.

The little influence which the criticism of savants—of even the most renowned among them—has had upon contemporary thought (*e.g.* it has not been able to prevent or put a stop to the quest in the domain of psychical sciences), is due precisely to their lack of correct information. They have always reasoned beside the question, analysing the facts imperfectly, admitting only those which they can easily explain, and rejecting all others as fraudulent or doubtful. To those who have studied these 'fraudulent and doubtful' facts, they are neither doubtful nor fraudulent, and the only effect, which the obstinate negation of certain savants has, is to rob their words of all serious influence and value. And this is a pity, for the savants themselves first of all, and afterwards for the public who, ill enlightened, become the prey of charlatans or the victims of *illuminés*.

APPENDIX C

It is to the kindness of M. Braunschweig that I owe the following story, which is instructive from several points of view. M. Braunschweig, a retired business man, intelligent and highly educated, is well known in his town. The phenomena, of which he guarantees the authenticity, have not been observed by me; but the disastrous consequences of his and M. Vergniat's too great confidence in a 'spirit' taught him such a useful and serious lesson, that I thought I would do well to make it known.

I only give it with that object, for I cannot personally vouch for the extraordinary facts in this interesting recital. I give this recital *in extenso* without changing anything, in order not to alter its physiognomy.

A Mystery

Canius Junius when walking to the scaffold said to his friends: 'You ask me if the soul is immortal; I am going to find out, and if I can, I will return to tell you.'

These notes, written in haste, and, as it were, off-hand, have no other claim than to bring a few strange facts together, leaving every one free to appreciate them as they think best.

For a while I was swayed by a preoccupation; I hesitated in the face of incredulity, which thrusts aside all which is neither matter nor number, to unveil phenomena of the nature of those which have been verified by so many persons already; but the duty imposed upon me of preserving my children from trials similar to mine, has triumphed over my hesitation, and I will proclaim the truth without any fear of their ever doubting their father's veracity.

In writing these lines, I yield to a feeling that the witness of mysterious facts ought to give, in the interests of humanity or science, a scrupulously exact narration of what he has seen. And particularly so when his revelations are likely to preserve the inexperienced from the pitfalls of an occult power which it would be as senseless to deny the existence of as to doubt of its power for good or evil, according as it desires good or evil. I therefore accomplish what I believe to be a duty. This conviction suffices to brave the spirit always more or less strong, which is ever inclined to deny what it cannot explain.

The fear of being accused of seeking for sympathy, by relating these facts of which I have been the victim, might also have stopped me from speaking; but for the loss of a few worldly goods, my mind, my soul, finds ample compensation in that certitude of a future life, which results from the facts the Master permitted me to witness.

It was in 1867. Attracted by the noise of a trumpet, I crossed *La Place Saint-André*, and went down the dark, narrow street which, at that time, skirted the Cathedral, and where *bric-à-brac* dealers used to spread out their wares. At the corner of the street Palangues, I came across a crowd gathered around an auctioneer who was holding a sale of statuary.

I was passing on indifferently when the auctioneer held up a statuette, the outlines and graceful pose of which immediately struck my fancy.

Was it a Virgin? A *mater dolorosa*? I do not know. But I still see that beautiful face, stamped with sadness, the eyes upraised, two great tears tremblingly seeming to implore me to put a stop to this profanation. The general appearance of the statue—its head bent slightly forward—and the graceful drapery denoted a work of art.

I bought it, yielding simply to the desire of possessing an artistic work, and not to satisfy any religious sentiment, which, I must own, did not exist.

I also bought a bracket to support the statuette, and a few minutes afterwards, everything was arranged in my room, Rue du Palais Tallien, No. 147.

My wife, Madame Vergniat, was at Périgord. When she returned home, she was surprised to see, in the most conspicuous spot in my room, a religious object which I myself had bought.

Her surprise was legitimate, for strong prejudices against religion left little room in my mind for religious practices.

Nothing strange happened in that house, although we lived in it for a long time after the purchase of the statuette. But I always felt such great pleasure in admiring my Virgin, that I have often wondered whether this ill-defined attraction were not the prelude, and, in some measure, a first influence of the mysterious facts which were going to happen.

We left our residence in the Rue du Palais Tallien to go to a house I had bought in the Rue Malbec, No. 116.

It was a detached house surrounded by a garden; it contained two bedrooms, a sitting-room, and a vestibule which served as a dining-room.

In order to make my recital intelligible, I am obliged to give a few details about the furniture and its arrangement.

A night-table separated my bed from the fireplace. Above the table was a holy-water fount; above the latter an oil painting representing the Virgin; finally, near the ceiling, the statuette on its bracket.

To the left of the night-table, in the recess beside the chimney, there was a panoply composed of swords and sabres.

When we were settled, Madame Vergniat again visited Périgord. It was during her absence that the first manifestation took place, but I attached no great importance to it.

Here are the circumstances under which the phenomenon occurred.

I was awakened in the night by the sound of a violent blow as of some one hammering at the front door. I promptly lit the candle, and looked at the time; it was one o'clock.

This visit was not of a reassuring nature, for, to be able to knock at the front door at this hour of the night, it was necessary to leap over the gate, which, securely closed, barred access to the house.

Before proceeding to open the door, I waited for a second knock, but in vain. I was awakened, at the same hour on the following night, by a similar rap.

The nurse, sleeping with the children in the next room, hearing the knock, got frightened. I tried to reassure her by saying: '*To-morrow a loaded gun will receive the individual who takes such a pleasure in arousing us.*'

I underline these words, because further on we will have occasion of seeing them repeated in a surprising manner.

A few months later, and without any new incidents occurring in the meantime, our nurse was discharged, and replaced by a strong healthy girl from the Pyrenees.

The nocturnal visit had been quite forgotten, when on the

23rd January 1868, Madame Vergniat and the nurse, who were busy in my room, heard something like a rustling on the window-panes, and saw the statuette bow twice, as though saluting them. At first they thought an earthquake had happened, and when I entered they related the incident to me in scared tones.

The statuette was indeed displaced; but was that sufficient to convince me? No.

I laughed at the story, convinced that my wife and the nurse were victims of an illusion.

However, on the morrow and following days, the same phenomena occurring at the same hour, that is to say towards eleven o'clock in the morning, I determined to stay at home and verify *de visu* this marvellous fact.

I got what I wanted; for on that day, the statuette turned about now to the right, now to the left, twelve or fourteen times. Sometimes it advanced and balanced itself on the edge of the pedestal.

The evolution was so prompt and so unexpected, that the eye could scarcely follow the movement.

I was not long in ascertaining that, before executing these movements, the mysterious power awaited the moment when the attention, tired of remaining on the *qui vive*, was off its guard. Then a sharp sounding rap, similar to the discharge of an electric spark, denoted that the evolution had taken place.

The picture hanging under the statuette lost its equilibrium, the *bénitier* fell over, and the swords swayed about like so many clock pendulums.

I noticed that the presence of my wife and the nurse aided these manifestations considerably; I even noticed that the appearance of either of them on the threshold of the room sufficed to provoke the phenomena.

I tried to dissimulate the preoccupation these manifestations caused me, and I pretended to attach no importance to them, in order to react against the exaltation and fear which were taking hold of Madame Vergniat and the nurse, and of the two work-women, who were also constant witnesses of this disorder.

But instead of aiding me in my efforts, the Virgin no longer contented herself with simple evolutions on her pedestal. She began to let herself fall down on the eiderdown of my bed, and would remain buried there until a sharp sounding rap announced that she had returned to her pedestal.

In a short time, the raps became more frequent, and did not always indicate displacements. We heard them on the doors, on the cupboards, etc., and even in the middle of the garden.

Thus on returning home one day, such a formidable rap resounded, that the neighbours ran to their windows, and called out to me: 'Well, M. Vergniat, one would think you were being saluted.'

These facts, already so extraordinary, were to be succeeded by others more extraordinary still.

The watchmaker, M. Ouvrard, who wound up our clocks every fortnight, having at one time taken up the study of somnambulism, thought he recognised in our nurse a subject who would be susceptible to magnetic influences, and proposed putting her to sleep.

A few minutes sufficed to obtain the state of prostration and insensibility which characterises magnetic sleep. For the first few seances, Marie's replies were unintelligible, but she very soon began to express herself clearly and even with volubility.

Considering the state of mind the manifestations of the statuette kept us in, it will be readily understood that the first question put to the somnambulist was, 'Do you see who it is who moves the Virgin about?'

'I see him,' she replied, 'he is close to me on his knees, praying. It is a man dressed in a brown coat, holding a dark-covered book in his hand. I do not see his face. I only see a part of his moustache, for he is turning his back to me.'

For several days her answers were always the same. But having insisted upon knowing the name of the man in prayer, the somnambulist at last replied, 'I am Madame's father.'

However, this assertion was soon contradicted by a more explicit declaration.

It was so easy to produce the magnetic sleep with Marie, that, once when she asked me to put her to sleep, I succeeded in doing so without having any other notions about such things than those I had gathered from our few seances; but I found it impossible to awaken her, and was obliged to send for the watchmaker, hoping he would help me out of my dilemma. He arrived, but his efforts were in vain.

The somnambulist made fun of us, and teased the watchmaker about his *embonpoint*.

This fact is to be noted, for it contradicts the current belief that the subject obeys the will of the magnetiser: but what follows reveals a phenomenon of vastly different interest.

Marie ceased to speak in her own name. A spirit having taken possession of her will, declared that all our efforts to awaken the somnambulist would be useless.

'I am quite comfortable here,' said the spirit, 'and it pleases me to stay. But at four o'clock, I am wanted elsewhere; the somnambulist will then awaken of her own accord. Have the patience to wait.'

At the hour mentioned, at the exact moment, the somnambulist returned to her normal state.

From that day forth the somnambulist remained constantly under the influence of the spirits who took possession of her during her sleep. Thus, as soon as she was asleep, the spirit sometimes said, 'I have only a few minutes to stay'; and when the time was up, Marie would awaken without any intervention.

During these more or less lengthy conversations, the spirit took a fancy to calling me his son. His advice testified to a disposition of great benevolence, and was chiefly of a profoundly religious character. It is incontestable that, by an inexplicable phenomenon, Marie's faculties were replaced, during these communications, by a spirit whose superiority it was impossible not to recognise, a superiority revealed by the tone of the discussion and the choice of expressions.

Pressing him one day for an explanation, I resolutely asked him, 'But who are you, then?'

'I am he, you wanted to receive with a loaded gun, when I knocked at your door at one o'clock in the morning.'

Remember the somnambulist was absolutely ignorant of this fact, as she was not in our service when the strange nocturnal visit occurred.

As for the Virgin, she was not at a standstill all this time; she continued to turn five or six times every day.

The good advice of the spirit, the purity of his principles, most certainly interested me; but I confess the statuette interested me more. Had I not a tangible, undeniable fact before me, just as stubborn as my reason tried to be? Stamping my feet I repeated, 'And still she turns.'

Ever on my guard, even in face of evidence, I gave myself the satisfaction of imprisoning the Virgin, but in such a way as to be able to verify her evolutions.

I had a niche of wire made, covered with transparent gauze, and, sealing it to the wall, I securely shut up the statuette therein.

My work done, I left my room. At once a formidable rap resounded: I ran to the room, everything had disappeared, the pedestal alone was still in its place. The Virgin, thrown on to the bed, was found buried in the eiderdown, whilst the casing was at the side of the bed.

My precautions having incurred displeasure, I took care not to renew them. When consulted on this, the next day, the somnambulist, or rather the spirit acting through her, said, 'Never touch the Virgin, leave her there; otherwise she will be transferred,' adding, 'he who takes her away from her pedestal will know very well how to put her back again.'

This recommendation was followed; but one day the statuette disappeared. Madame Vergniat having quite got over her first fears, searched for it actively everywhere, and after having turned the house upside down in her quest, found it in a cupboard behind the children's bed. This cupboard, being dissimulated by tapestry, had never been used, and we did not even know of its existence.

How had the Virgin got into it?

The displacements became more and more frequent. For instance, the statuette took it into its head to change rooms, and the sitting-room became its favourite resort, but it never let a whole day pass without reappearing upon its pedestal.

The doors opened and shut before it with the same sharp sound which followed each evolution. All this went on so rapidly that we were more surprised than inconvenienced.

Under the influence of these phenomena, the ordinary sleep of the somnambulist became heavier. At night she was often heard speaking aloud. She awakened with difficulty, and having shaken off her torpor, she could not open her eyes. 'They feel as though they were glued down,' she used to say. But placing her fingers on Marie's eyelids, Madame Vergniat used to pray, and the difficulty would disappear.

In her ordinary sleep, the conversation was not serious; it was more often commonplace, full of jesting, sometimes even of bad taste; whereas in provoked sleep, we constantly found a serious spirit, professing the purest maxims, and giving advice full of sincere charity.

I asked this mysterious spirit if it were true that he was Madame's father, as he had once declared himself to be.

Here is his reply, I give it word for word: 'My son, I read in your mind (for you cannot hide your thoughts from me) that not having enough faith to attribute to God the happiness of the visit you receive in your house, you seek its explanation in absurd suppositions. *Do not believe in spiritism, my son.*

'God, who is essentially good, could not permit your spirit-friends, after having gone through all the trials of earth, to be condemned to look on at the turpitudes and the sufferings of those who are dear to them. This is a torture which God did not wish to reserve for you.

'Yes, a Spirit exists; but He is alone, unique, and that Spirit is mine. It is He who breathes into all things, who animates all things; He who makes you act, walk, stop when you believe that your own will is all-powerful.

'That Spirit, I repeat, is unique. It is the Master's.'

Let us remark, *en passant*, that this is the opinion of Mallbranche, who claims God to be the immediate Author of the union we admire between soul and body.

'I see that you doubt my words,' added the spirit, '(for I have already told you that you cannot hide your thoughts or actions from me), and you are saying, "What presumption! to suppose that I have deserved such a visit, and that the Divine Spirit has knocked at my door!"

'You prefer, therefore, my son, to doubt my words and to stand aloof from the truth. So be it! but do not forget, whatever your appreciation may be about me and the object of my visit, be assured that I am only able to visit your home in pursuance of a supreme will, and that all your efforts to drive me away, and even my desire to leave you before the accomplishment of my mission, would be equally useless.

'Welcome me, therefore, as a kind father who comes to help his son to tread the painful path of life. I have never left you since you came into the world. We have gone through many worries together, we have borne many sorrows; but better times are at hand, and I am able to reveal to you, my child, that from the moment I am able to make my voice heard, the blessing of the Master will assure you the repose of body, soul, and spirit.

'No more worry for you, your father is here to shield you. But in exchange for the good which my mission is to bring you, I ask you to turn your thoughts to the Creator, and thank Him for the immense favour He has accorded you. For, learn that no man has ever before received such a Visitor in his home.

'I desire you to attend divine service regularly, and to go to communion.

'I also desire you to help those people whose addresses and needs I will make known to you; but as I am a protector, if I impose charges upon you, I will also procure you the means of providing for them.'

Imagine what an influence these mysterious facts already exercised over me, when I say that I promised everything, and, like a submissive child, took the communion with fervour.

From that day forth the benevolence of the unknown was extended over every one and every thing, from the household to the house needs. His solicitude, for the somnambulist especially, drove him sometimes to charge me with delicate missions, of which I will give an example.

I had once just put Marie to sleep, when the spirit manifested itself, saying :—

'I am going to speak to you about some of the private affairs of the somnambulist, and I beg you to follow my instructions.

'This girl thinks of marrying a carpenter, named Toussaint, who has been following her about for a long time. But Marie's parents, who are honest folk, will never consent to this marriage. First of all, because Toussaint is a worthless fellow, and in the second place, because Toussaint's brother was condemned *yesterday* to pay an ignominious penalty for a foul crime he has committed.

'Therefore, Marie must cease to know this young man; moreover, his jealous and violent character might soon endanger her life.

'Marie is ignorant of these details. Therefore, when she awakens, take care not to repeat our conversation; but to-morrow, when returning from Bordeaux, tell her about this as though it were some news you had heard of in town.

'Marie will deny everything, first of all; she will pretend not to know the individual; but insist upon it, and she will confess everything.'

And this, in fact, is what happened.

The spirit went on to say :—

'This workman has recently wounded his hand, and is consequently debarred from working; he is always prowling about the house, and I advise you to be on your guard against him.'

Marie often used to ask me to put her to sleep in the evening.

Then, strange to say, she would tell us when and how many times this man Toussaint would pass the door, the next day.

This information was always correct. However, one day, our man did not turn up at the given time—he was two minutes late. Marie was asleep in the sitting-room, and I went backwards and forwards from her to the terrace. I was nearly losing patience, when she cried out, 'He is coming—you will barely have time to get to the terrace.' And so it was; as soon as I reached my post of observation, the carpenter came into the Rue Malbec out of the Rue Bègles.

A few days afterwards, the spirit, whom the somnambulist called 'Grand Father,' warned us that Marie ran a great risk. Toussaint having had the door shown to him everywhere because of the disgrace which had fallen upon his family, had made up his mind to avenge himself.

Animated with the worst designs, he had shaved off his beard in order to make himself unrecognisable; and hiding a large knife under his coat, he was bending his way to the house, with the fixed purpose, said the spirit, of striking Marie.

When giving us this information through the somnambulist, our mysterious friend added: 'Do not allow this girl to go out to-day. I will deliver you from this dangerous man very soon, by making him wish to go on a long voyage, from which he will never return.'

Two or three days afterwards, Marie heard that this individual had left for Algeria.

First of all we have seen, by the substitution of the spirit to the faculties of the somnambulist, how our free-will is subordinated to occult influences. And if the objection be made that in that case, magnetic influences facilitated this substitution, there still remains the case of the carpenter, whose free-will was absolutely subjugated after premeditation, as is shown by the spirit's declaration that he would 'make him wish to take a long voyage from which the individual would never return.'

In proportion as these strange facts succeeded each other, we yielded further and further to an influence from which it was impossible to escape—I may even say we were happy to obey.

How could we thrust aside advice which was always thoroughly honest, and with which the name of God was constantly associated?

After the somnambulist, Madame Vergniat was the one who felt the effects of this mysterious atmosphere the most strongly.

For my part, I had, at first, confined myself simply to observing the phenomena, to accepting them only as a study; but under the influence of surprise upon surprise, filled with admiration, I ended in blind submission. And yet, we were only at the beginning of our marvellous manifestations.

Often, during a meal, if we had need of something or other, Marie would bring it to us before we asked for it. A voice, which she thought was at times mine, at times Madame Vergniat's, transmitted our desire to her before it was expressed. It was a splendid case of thought transference.

If the maid's work was not quite properly done, he who watched over the house so assiduously, punished her immediately, by removing with remarkable dexterity the foulard she wore on her head. And if she ever happened to be wanting in politeness towards us, she was instantly called to order in the same way, without any consideration for the place or circumstances she might be in at the moment. I have often seen her foulard thrown on the ground, to remind her that she should allow us to pass before her into a carriage, omnibus, etc.

I have also had occasion to witness a very surprising manifestation, surprising because of the facility shown for displacing a piece of furniture the weight of which was relatively considerable.

Often, after retiring to rest, the somnambulist would feel her bed gently rolled into the centre of the floor, and then back again to its place. This to-and-fro movement used to be repeated as often as three or four times in the same evening; the movement was slow, we could see distinctly that great mass moving about under the impulsion of some invisible force.

The somnambulist, as I said in the beginning, was a big, stout girl from the Pyrenees. She could neither read nor write, and the sight of all these supernatural things astounded and alarmed her. I have remarked that, in her normal state, she often forgot what she had seen the previous day. But what she really did understand was that 'Grand Father' was not satisfied with her when a crust of bread or some cheese was thrown at her head; this was a sure sign that there was a hitch somewhere.

In the vestibule, which we used as a dining-room, a small Louis xv. lustre was suspended; it often swayed about when we sat down to meals, and the movement, which was always preceded by a rustling on the metal chains, was slow or accelerated according to my wife's expressed or unexpressed wish.

If we had visitors, everything was so quiet that no one would ever have suspected what strange things happened to us habitually. It looked as though these manifestations were reserved for the inmates of the house and for a few privileged guests, whose attention was, perforce, aroused by the noise.

Two young girls, one Anna ——, from Périgord, the other Mathilde ——, from Bordeaux, who worked almost constantly in our house, were present at most of these occurrences, and 'Grand Father' even testified much affection for these girls.

In the beginning, I said that when the statuette turned on its pedestal, the swords had moved about in the contrary direction. One of them was unhooked and deposited in a corner of the wall, but in the presence of Madame Vergniat an invisible force almost immediately put it slowly back again in its place.

The oscillations of the lustre, the movements of the swords, the displacements of the bed were the only phenomena which the eye was able to follow; all the others were so rapid that they escaped even the most vigilant attention.

Our presence in the house was not necessary to produce noises and other phenomena. The fact which I am going to relate contradicts the opinion emitted by some spiritists, that spirits borrow the force which is indispensable to produce these displacements from the mediums or assistants.

We once went to spend a day in the country, taking the nurse with us, and leaving the house empty for the day. Returning in the evening, the neighbours came out to meet us saying that they feared all our crockery was broken, because ever since our departure a dreadful noise had reigned in the house. We searched all the rooms, but no damage had been done, and everything was in its place.

Where, therefore, in that empty house had the spirit taken the auxiliary force which we are told is necessary for its manifestations?

I was very reserved respecting these facts. I did not care to noise them abroad, for had I done so controversy would certainly have arisen.

Another reason for remaining silent was, that once after having spoken of these events to the member of a reputedly religious family, the Virgin refused to make any evolution before this visitor. But scarcely was the incredulous person out of the house when the statuette was displaced.

The same evening I put Marie to sleep, and reproached the spirit severely.

'What happens here is for you alone,' he replied, 'and ought not to be exhibited as a spectacle.'

However, this apparently severe admonition was soon infringed upon by himself under the following circumstances:—

M. Bossuet, a hairdresser in the Rue Bouffard, at Bordeaux, was dressing Madame Vergniat's hair in the sitting-room: my wife heard the sharp rap which usually announced a displacement of the Virgin. She got up, and without saying anything went into the room, followed instinctively by M. Bossuet. The Virgin was balancing herself on the edge of the bracket. M. Bossuet, quickly understanding what was happening, cried out in admiration, '*Mon Dieu!* how glad I am to have seen such a thing!'

M. Bossuet is dead now; who can say whether he has found the solution of the problem which engages us?

I took advantage of this incident to ask why the Virgin had moved during M. Bossuet's visit, since it was told me that these favours were exclusively reserved for the household.

'I choose my company,' replied the spirit, 'and I had to reward M. Bossuet for having patiently reproduced the features of Christ in some hair.'

I do not know if it be true—though many have since assured me it is true—that M. Bossuet was the author of such a work. I confine myself, as a faithful reporter, to recording the reply which was given me.

Our house had one inconvenience—a very disagreeable one in winter—that of obliging the maid to cross the garden in order to open the gate for the milkman, who rang every morning at daybreak.

We were looking for a combination which might enable us to avoid this inconvenience, when our kind protector came to our aid.

This fact is one of the most curious of our long series of surprising adventures.

Henceforth, when the milkman's cart stopped at the gate and before he rang, a mysterious power shot back the bolt in the lock. Then the gate opened, and the milkman placed on the window-sill the jug of milk, which the domestic took in later on.

Perhaps the milkman thought a special mechanism allowed us to open the door. However that may be, his imagination was evidently at work, for he was heard to say aloud, when getting into his cart, 'All the same, this is a very queer house.'

Sometimes, after having attended vespers either at Sainte-Croix or at the Vieillards, we used to take a long walk, and often we returned home tired and impatient to sit down and rest a while.

So that we might not have to wait, an invisible hand used to knock at the door before we arrived there.

This fact could not be hidden, and our neighbour, Madame Pardeau, in a good position for observation, laughed at the attentions shown us.

At about this time there was a strange substitution, one which would, henceforth, render the intervention of the somnambulist unnecessary. Madame Vergniat and I were returning home after visiting Talence. On the way, my wife turned round quickly, saying: 'Some one has just called me: twice I heard a voice say, "Héloïse! Héloïse!"'

From that day forth, Madame Vergniat asked questions mentally and a foreign voice answered them.

Very soon the voice took the initiative of conversations, and absorbing Madame Vergniat's faculties, spoke through her.

There was no being deceived; it was easy to recognise the same benevolent spirit, which had only changed his dwelling-place, as it were.

The first recommendation given through Madame Vergniat was to cease putting Marie to sleep. 'Henceforth you will not be able to do so, without incurring much unpleasantness.'

But my keen desire to see and to observe everything was so great, that it got the better of this last advice, and I put the somnambulist to sleep as usual. Ill came of it. To the charitable and benevolent discourses succeeded a dishevelled language, which I thought I could put an end to by awakening the somnambulist; but it was impossible to do so.

She walked about the room with her eyes closed, crying out: 'I will wake up when it suits me to do so. I am here, and I want to stay just because my staying annoys you.' Then she tried to go out to walk about in the garden, and I was obliged to lock the door.

This scene, which lasted for several hours, took away my wish for further experimentation with Marie.

From that time, Marie was subjected to several ill-defined influences during her ordinary sleep; she spoke aloud, sometimes she used serious language; sometimes she seemed to be filled with mad joy. The former depth and goodness in advice given through her had disappeared.

Moreover, I was amply compensated by the new situation which rendered the somnambulist's intervention unnecessary, and I thought no further of risking the disagreeable scene of which I have spoken. I may even say that all magnetic attempts and experiments with Marie ended here. There was no further question of them.

Sometimes the spirit when consulted did not answer. Madame Vergniat would then say, 'I speak to him, but he does not reply.' But he never kept us waiting very long.

The spirit often announced his departure. 'If you have something to ask me, or to tell me,' he would say, 'be quick, because I am obliged to go away, and will only be able to return to-morrow at such and such a time.'

And, until the time indicated had arrived, all questioning was useless. There were no replies.

Hundreds of times I had had occasion of verifying the exactness of information furnished by means of Marie; but it remained to me to find out if the information given by the new channel had the same value.

I had not long to wait before attaining certitude in that respect.

It was on a winter's evening, the night was pitch dark, it was pouring in torrents. Returning home from business, the maid came to tell me that a small Havanese dog, which a neighbour had kindly given us, had gone astray. As I said, the weather was fearful, and we could not think of going out to search for the tiny animal. But, as I appeared to be troubled about the matter, Madame Vergniat, who so far had said nothing, raised her head, and addressing me in the peculiar way which announced an official communication, said, 'So you were really attached to that little animal! Very well! do not be sad, you will find it again. I see it; a workman is holding it under his jacket in a hairdresser's establishment in the Rue Bègles (the little hunchback).'

The information was precise; given by the somnambulist, I would not have hesitated believing it; but I now needed further proof; therefore, in spite of the weather, I went out in search of the dog. My quest having led me to the hairdresser's, I looked timidly in at the window, when the hunchback perceived me, and called out: 'Do you want something, M. Vergniat?'

I replied, 'If you should happen to hear that a small Havanese dog has been found, be kind enough to let me know.'

A workman, who was in the shop, said : 'Five minutes ago I held it in my jacket trying to warm it. I had picked it up sopping wet, in a corner of the street, where I dropped it again.'

Some few steps further off, I observed a white spot in the darkness. It was Fleurette crouching down in the shelter of a doorway.

I returned home triumphantly, carrying the children's happiness with me, as well as the confirmation of the infallibility of our protector. The influence of this power, which revealed itself as unlimited, will be easily understood. Always gaining fresh ground by new supernatural phenomena, its will entirely superseded ours. What in the beginning it formulated as a desire, soon became an order. It paid attention to the smallest details; designated the necessary provisions for the day and fixed the prices thereof. If a more important purchase than usual had to be made, he indicated the shop and price beforehand.

These facts gave rise to some curious incidents. Thus, for example, when a shopkeeper charged too high a price. 'Grand Father,' always at hand, used to whisper to Madame Vergniat, 'Tell that woman her goods only cost her such and such a price. Offer her so much. That is sufficient profit. . . .'

The shopkeeper, dumfounded, could not deny, and the bargain would be concluded.

I reveal all these facts without hesitation, persuaded that the study of such persistent and varied manifestations may help to lift the mysterious veil surrounding us. Moreover, why should I hesitate or keep silent? Have I not seen? The more incomprehensible the facts may be, the greater the duty to reveal them.

I will, perhaps, be accused of weakness by showing so much submission to this occult power, which, however, only put forth the claim of coming from God, and expressed none but honourable sentiments. To my accusers, I will reply, 'Go through the same trial, then I will recognise your right to criticise.'

As for weakness, this was never one of my failings, unless I should make an exception for the sentiment, which makes me bow before the Master—a sentiment I mean to preserve.

I said my wife and I went regularly to vespers, sometimes at Talence, sometimes at Sainte-Croix; but more often at the Vieillards.

I remember that once when gazing upon these latter poor creatures, ever at the mercy of public charity, our mysterious guest confided to us: 'Without my visit, my children, that fate might have been yours.'

In the beginning, I said I had promised to take the communion; I did so with fervour, so profoundly had these mysterious facts impressed me; I carried submission to the extent of giving up theatres, and all amusements, obeying the express desire of the unknown.

To make up for this, I was permitted to join every pilgrimage.

One morning, as I was starting for my office, Madame Vergniat, with an inspired air, dictated the following order to me: 'You must send a telegram to Paris this morning, bidding the agents to sell out 6000 francs worth of French stock at 3 per cent., and buy in 10,000 francs of Italian stock.' He added: 'Did I not tell you, that when it would please me to impose an obligation upon you, it would never be at your own expense? Now, I have need of a few thousand francs, the use of which I will point out to you when the time comes.'

In spite of the strange things I had already seen, I was bewildered. Madame Vergniat, although the wife of a stockbroker, had never interested herself in business affairs, and was absolutely ignorant of financial combinations.

The terms used to dictate the transaction, indicated that the operation was planned by a mind accustomed to this kind of business.

As the advice was not dangerous, and, in case of failure, would not carry me very far, I telegraphed to Paris without hesitating. Before I returned home in the evening, I had the reply, and wished to communicate it to my mysterious client. 'Useless,' he said to me, 'I know it.'

I took advantage of this circumstance of talking business with him, with the object of finding out just how far the spirit's knowledge, in matters of speculation, went.

'Do you know,' I said to him, 'that your transaction is founded on two liquidations. The Italian stock is in liquidation for the 15th inst., and the 3 per cent. for the end of the month.'

'I did it purposely. The Italian will be liquidated first, for the profits thereof are urgently required. Whoever procures the French stock for the end of the month is destined to offer a present to his daughter. I will give you a few instructions on this subject.'

I risked the question: 'You then believe in the rise of the Italian and fall of the French stock?'

'Your Father is not one who doubts, who believes, or who only hopes; He is always sure, because He is the Master.'

From the day the exchange transaction was made, the two contrary movements, favourable to the arbitration, were not belied; and (an important fact to take note of) every morning, with mathematical precision, the unknown predicted the stock-list which the telegraph only brought at four o'clock in the afternoon.

I wish to insist upon this fact, because some people seem to question the spirits' possibility of foretelling the future.

Always preoccupied in studying these facts, I sometimes asked, the evening before, what the rate would be the following day. 'I cannot tell you before to-morrow morning. I have need of the night to gather my information.'

One day, there was a difference of a farthing between the rate predicted in the morning, and the official rate received at four o'clock. When I made the remark, the unknown said to me: 'It was a bad head who rang down the changes at the stroke of the bell.' The spirit evidently even possessed the slang of the stockbrokers' ring.

Seeing so much penetration, I meekly asked if he could be useful to me in my own business. He replied: 'I did not come for that; my visit has another object in view; nevertheless I think I can be useful to you, and when the opportunity occurs, I will not forget.'

This declaration seemed to contradict the first one. At the outset of these manifestations, the 'Master's' blessing assured the repose of body, soul, and spirit: 'No more worries for you: your Father is here to turn them all aside.' There was now a slight deviation which we cannot help observing.

Let us, however, return to this power of penetration; it was such, that, consulted upon the state of my cash-box, he at once told me how much it contained. For him, it was mere child's play to tell any one the contents of their purse.

During the arbitration process, I sometimes asked him, 'What profit does your stock operation give you this evening?' He mentioned it at once, and, without omitting a farthing, he even counted brokerage and the price of telegrams.

'Your business affairs,' said he, 'should no longer trouble you, for they are mine. I will look after them: you have only to obey, and to satisfy me in order to be rewarded.

'You may be sure that nothing would be easier for me than to load you with riches any day; and, if I make you wait, it is because you made me wait a long time before I was able to bring you to me.'

This is another remark which is not any clearer than the one I quoted a little while ago.

Whilst the arbitration was proceeding favourably, the Virgin continued her evolutions; however, they were soon to cease.

One afternoon she made some evolutions noisier than usual, and going out of the house, went and placed herself upon some grape-vines in the garden.

At that moment, one of our former servants, a girl named Caroline T. . . ., the same who was in our service when the nocturnal visit occurred, happened to come up to the house; seeing the statue in the garden, she and another servant decided to put it back again on its pedestal.

It was scarcely replaced when a violent rap resounded, and the Virgin fell on the ground broken to pieces.

Great was Madame Vergniat's grief when she heard of the accident. I must own that I, too, was vexed. The debris were gathered up and preserved with veneration for a long time.

But the pedestal remained vacant. Then the thought came to me of asking our protector if it would be possible to find a similar statuette.

'I will see about it to-night,' he replied. The spirit often begged me to leave him the night for reflection. He said it was then that he found the necessary information.

The next day, faithful to his promise, he gave me the following information: 'There is, in Bordeaux, a Virgin like the one which is broken. You will find it at a sculptor's in the Rue Bouquière (a small shop situated in a corner of the street). There is only that one specimen, and the tradesman has no cast.'

I quickly took one of the fragments, and went to the Rue Bouquière. I found the shop, and the tradesman told me he had a Virgin similar to the one I desired, but that he had no cast of it. 'I will look for it, and you may come and fetch it this evening.' The same evening I returned to Malbec with the statuette which was going to stifle all regrets.

My arrival with the statuette was the occasion for another official communication: 'My son, that Virgin will be displaced. I will not tell you where I shall carry it to; she herself will reveal it to you. Now, as she will go very far away, you must put your name and address inside the statuette.' This was done.

Placed upon the pedestal, the new Virgin turned round three times the day after her arrival; since that day she never stirred.

I do not know if she will ever go on this journey; in any case, she is a long time making her preparations.

All the incidents touching the statuette end here: the circumstances of the *année terrible* caused it to pass into other hands.

We said that the stock transaction was going on better and better. And with his facility to foretell the future, the unknown sold out the Italian stock at the highest rate, whilst he waited for several days to buy back his 3 per cent. favourably.

All this was done with astounding precision; with a power equal to his, fortune was simply without bounds.

The profits of these two transactions amounted to about three thousand francs. With the funds resulting from the liquidation of the 15th I was given the mission to reserve one thousand francs for the father of a large family. And the souvenir of this good action, for which, in a way, I was but an agent, rejoices me still.

Other less important distributions were ordered to be made.

Finally, to crown everything, we were told to illuminate our garden in honour of the Virgin.

The profits of the second liquidation followed afterwards, and gave rise to a curious incident.

On pay-day, when the profits were at the disposition of the mysterious spirit, he begged me to return to Bordeaux to buy a piano, which he offered to my daughter. (This was the 'present' which had been spoken of in the beginning of these bourse transactions.)

'Go,' he said, 'to M. Caudéré's, Allées de Tourny, No. 50, where you will buy a second-hand piano; you will be asked six hundred and fifty francs for it.'

Upon making the remark that I needed precise indications in order to avoid all confusion, he replied: 'It is not necessary. I will be there to see that they offer you the piano I want. You will not be obliged to bargain, for the price is less than the value of the instrument.'

How could I resist the commands of such a kind-hearted friend, whose power seemed to have no other limit than that of his will?

Moreover, was it my province to discuss the manner of employing money which did not belong to me?

Therefore I arrived at Allées de Tourny. Madame Caudéré was alone in the shop. I followed my instructions, and was offered a second-hand piano for six hundred francs. It was fifty francs below the stated price. I hesitated taking it, but, remembering his own words, '*I will be there*,' I concluded the bargain on the express condition that the instrument might be delivered the same evening, according to our benefactor's will.

I arrived home quickly, impatient to have an explanation concerning the fifty francs.

It was the first time I had observed an irregularity, and as my submission was only the result of an infallibility which, until then, had never been belied, the absolute and regular continuation of these facts was required in order to keep up that blind confidence which already impaired so seriously my free will.

It was with almost a triumphant air I announced that the piano had only cost six hundred francs.

'I know it,' said the unknown; 'but Madame made a mistake.'

On the morrow, when settling the account, the shopkeeper said to me: 'You got a bargain yesterday; my wife made a mistake in selling you for six hundred francs a piano I had fixed at six hundred and fifty.'

Absorbed in these supernatural incidents, I did not think of replying. I walked slowly home wrapped in thought. I related to the mysterious being what had happened to me at the piano-shop.

If my mystical preoccupations had made me forget my duty for an instant, he was not long in recalling it to me.

'I apprised you of it,' he answered. I understood, and brought back the fifty francs to the tradesman, not caring to benefit by a mistake.

At that time my daughter's musical knowledge was limited to the '*Bon Roi Dagobert*,' and yet, when she sat down to the piano, her fingers, yielding to some mysterious influence, moved involuntarily over the piano, and played unknown airs whose accompaniments were in accordance with all the rules of harmony.

Convinced that the child was playing from memory, the pianoforte-tuner complimented her upon her musical dispositions.

This phenomenon was only produced three or four times; it is true, I always took care to take the child away from the piano as soon as I suspected the approach of the influence.

The stock transaction accomplished, other business, patronised and advised by the protector, succeeded as well as the first. The object was always charity. These operations were not important; but for all that, their results increased the importance of the help every day.

The spirit had reserved to himself the right of designating the persons he wished to help. Sometimes he indicated the name, but more often he confined himself to mentioning the street, the number, and flat.

I remember one Sunday, while breakfasting, I was suddenly told to go *immediately* and visit a family living in a tiny house behind the Rue François-de-Sourdis. It was a long way off, and notwithstanding the indications given me, I went up and down several streets in that quarter of the town in vain, and I returned without having been able to fulfil my mission.

'You must go back again,' said the unknown, 'and before breakfasting; for you yourself can wait; but it is not the same there, where the children are hungry . . . !'

Every morning, when leaving home to go to my office, I was commissioned to do a good work. 'In such and such a street, at such and such a number and flat, at the door to the right, etc., lives a widow; you will give her five francs, or ten francs, and so forth. . . .'

In the beginning, fearing to be led astray, these missions made me feel rather uncomfortable, especially when he sent me to places where there was no apparent misery; but he never made a mistake.

To provide for these distributions, and carry out certain religious projects, which he acknowledged to me — such, for example, as the erection of a chapel on the ground of 'Malbec,' in order to perpetuate the memory of his visit—to provide, I say, for so much expense, he considerably increased the figure of his operations.

It is true that an affair undertaken by his order always the same evening gave good results. And it was necessary it should be rigorously so, if he wished to maintain the blind confidence he seemed so desirous of preserving.

It was then that he changed his tactics. Instead of taking his profits at each liquidation, he now opposed himself to any realisation whatsoever.

In the face of such a dangerous system, I timidly risked some remarks :—

'No one could guide me better than you do, and I would be already *too rich* if, as before, you took advantage of every fluctuation of the market, instead of opposing yourself to the realisation of the profits. It is true there is a large margin on your purchases, but our prosperity is only artificial, since it is but the result of recharges and not of liquidated operations. That is to say, by this system we are constantly laying ourselves open to emergencies.'

It was also under this mysterious inspiration that I then took an engagement to buy out the interest of my sleeping partners.

Always under the same guidance, our business affairs rapidly created an opulent position for me. The upward movement of stocks continued, and if at times a slight reaction arose, it could only touch a small part of the profits already acquired, and constantly carried over.

The dangerous system of non-realisation, we see, had not been abandoned.

I often complained.

It was thus that on the 1st January 1870 (a Sunday, I think), the *Coulisse* having quoted on the boulevards 75·05 francs, and this rate assuring us a profit of 30,000 francs on one affair alone, I implored him to consent to realising. He refused energetically, saying, 'Money-jobbing does not suit me, I have put you in a position which will be your last affair.' Moreover, he affected a great dislike to my profession, saying he desired to see me leave it as speedily as possible.

Sometimes the spirit dropped certain exclamations, aside, as it were, the most frequent of which was, '*What a struggle!*'

I paid no attention to this, and it was only after the tragic *dénouement* of this affair that the souvenir of these exclamations, although so frequently repeated, came back to my memory.

The circumstances which follow sadly demonstrate that during two and a half years the aim, so patiently followed, was simply to bribe my confidence with strange revelations, and to keep me under his thumb.

This result obtained, he had only to use influence in order to keep me in a position whose importance could not help being fatal, in view of coming events, and which the unknown's power of penetration permitted him to foresee.

It was in the midst of all this, in a way, borrowed prosperity, since it only resulted from non-realised operations, that I took possession of my new residence, Rue d'Enghien, No. 11.

For several months, although it was impossible for stock to rise above seventy-five francs, faithful to his system, the unknown refused to sell out.

It was therefore necessary to continue. But could I complain if funds remained stationary? The profits entered into cash as a consequence of the rise of stocks, which seemed a sufficient guarantee against any event whatsoever.

Moreover, it seemed to me mean to reproach him with not giving me more, when I owed him already such unhoped-for prosperity.

My tranquillity was, therefore, absolute when complications with Germany broke out. Then, from the first day, I wished to liquidate.

'There, are your fears beginning again as at the time of the Luxembourg incident? Believe him who is the Master, and who for nearly three years has never deceived you.'

Notwithstanding his affirmations, two days afterwards war was decided, and in taking possession of the telegraph lines, the light-hearted minister put the finishing-stroke to my ruin, for it placed me in the impossibility of communicating, and therefore of limiting my loss.

Whatever may be the danger of a struggle, we succumb with less regret when we have fought on equal terms; but here, without speaking of the strange circumstances, the suppression of telegraphic communication placed me in the position of a man bound hand and foot, who is thrown into the sea and reproached for not swimming.

In this critical moment, the unknown was absolutely dumb. He answered none of the questions I asked him. And yet the situation was most critical; for twenty years of labour disappeared into the gulf, and, moreover, to this material loss was added the grief of being forced to remain separated from my daughter, who was dangerously ill.

A last explanation took place: 'There, then,' I said to him, 'here is what you have brought me to, and I do not know who you are; I only know that you have appealed to honourable sentiments, in order to make me your dupe, and that you have not hesitated using the name of God when laying your snares.'

I was too irritated to heed his reply; and I have only a vague souvenir of the word '*trials*' faltered out in answer to my upbraidings.

Thus ends this long and sad 'story.'

I have given this curious self-observation *in extenso.* The personification is liable to errors which may be dangerous if we abandon ourselves to its direction, as too many people are tempted to do.

The extraordinary facts with which Madame Vergniat's life was filled are not confined to those just related; she appears to have possessed supernormal faculties right up to the last. It might be of considerable interest if her family would give a detailed account of her life.

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